

BGANZ Governance Proposals

16 November 2021

Important information for BGANZ members

Dear BGANZ members,

I'm writing to inform you of important proposed changes that BGANZ Council are recommending. These changes, if adopted, will enable BGANZ to improve its representation of botanic gardens and arboreta, and increase benefit for members in coming years.

Since 2004 BGANZ has grown as an organisation. From the first meeting in Geelong, we now have over 130 botanic gardens members, 4 active Regional Groups, and 2 outstanding Specialist Groups (BGEN and BCARM).

Over the past 18 months BGANZ Council has been reviewing our strategic objectives and exploring the most appropriate governance structure to achieve these objectives into the future. We have been supported by consultants *Strategic Matters*, and reached out to hear your views on what is important with an online survey and workshop a little over a year ago. What has become clear to Council is that we are blessed with a highly engaged membership, but for us to grow and service member needs better we need to make some changes. Specifically, through diversification of our skills base and an increase in our resources.

With this aspiration set, legal and accounting advice was sought and recommended that BGANZ change from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee overseen by a Board. The proposed Board structure was developed, a new constitution developed and, following recent sign-off by BGANZ Council, is now ready to put to you for consideration.

This proposal will be put to members at a Special General Meeting (SGM) in Autumn 2022.

Before the SGM, Council aims to inform members about the proposed changes over the next two months. I encourage members to inform themselves of proposed changes, through documents like this one, the online presentation [23th November 2021](#) and a member feedback survey to be released after the presentation. Our CEO Eamonn Flanagan, myself, and our regional group chairs are available for further questions. Please, in the first instance, email secretariat@bganz.org.au if you have any questions.

In brief - the key proposed changes:

- BGANZ becomes a company limited by guarantee, operating under a new constitution that complies with all legal and financial requirements
- BGANZ Board is comprised of appointed skills-based members and elected BGANZ members, with at least 50% of Board members being BGANZ members
- BGANZ Board has representation from Australia, New Zealand and regional gardens.

- Regional groups and specialist groups (eg BGEN and BCARM) will continue to operate, with representation on the Board through a Member Committee
- Member categories remain and voting rights for members remain the same
- Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, if gained, will increase revenues from tax deductible gift recipients (constitution changes were required to enable this application).
- BGANZ Board to commence 1 July 2022

Please take the opportunity to inform yourself of the changes as they are proposed. There is a [FAQ document attached](#) to this document as well as the proposed constitution. I hope you can join the online presentation on Tuesday 23 November ([meeting link](#)).

Regards



Chris Russell
BGANZ President

For more information visit – www.bganz.org.au