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ADVOCACY IN ACTION NEWSLETTER



CEO's message

It's safe to say that significant changes to the NDIS – some already here, others being prepared for rollout – are now the focus of attention for most people with disabilities and disability advocacy groups. These changes are also causing considerable worry and unease for people with disabilities, who not surprisingly wonder whether they will be negatively affected by them.

VALID is responding to this situation in several ways. We are beginning to deliver information sessions for people with disabilities, family members and sector workers on what the changes mean in practice. We're also adding our voice to those of allies in the sector who are speaking out both on what some of the changes mean and on how they are being planned and introduced.

VALID will also be bringing a close focus to bear on NDIS-related issues at our winter conference, *Advocacy in Action*, returning for its second year on 22-23 June in Bell St, Preston (see news item below). The conference is a great opportunity to hear directly from the NDIA, find out more about the changes and discuss them with others in the disability advocacy sector.

The conference will offer many other exciting and insightful sessions, so please “save the date” and keep an eye open for more information in coming weeks



Fionn Skiotis
CEO

Save the date: Advocacy in Action Conference 2026



The Advocacy in Action Conference is returning in 2026 for its second year, bringing together people with disability, advocates, families and supporters for two days of discussion, connection and shared learning.

Hosted by VALID, the conference will create space for people to speak up about the real issues affecting people with disability and the future of advocacy. The conference's theme will be **Connecting Voices, Creating Change**.

📅 22 – 23 June 2026

🕒 9.00am – 4.30pm

📍 Novotel, 215 Bell Street, Preston

More information and registration details will be shared soon!

Building leadership through lived experience



contribute and lead.

Inez Winters is leading the development of **VALID's Lived Experience Network (VLEN)**, a new internal initiative designed to strengthen leadership and connection for staff with intellectual and cognitive disability.

The VLEN Team will act as a hub across the organisation, supporting staff to build confidence, access training opportunities, contribute across teams and strengthen peer connections.

“I want staff with lived experience to feel confident sharing their ideas and stepping into leadership,” says Inez. “The VLEN Team will help create a space where people can learn from each other and have a stronger voice within VALID.”

Through initiatives like the VLEN Team, VALID is continuing to invest in the leadership and voice of people with disability across the organisation.

Upcoming VALID training for families



VALID Connect is running upcoming online workshops for families of people with disability, designed to provide practical guidance and support.

The workshop “**What are the key changes to the NDIS?**” will help families understand recent changes to the scheme, including:

- impairment notices
- funding periods
- support needs assessments and support lists.

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longer be able to provide care.

All sessions are delivered online by trainers with lived experience supporting family members through the NDIS.

Learn more or register: valid.org.au/training-programs/training-for-families/

Meet the VALID Board - William Ward-Boas



VALID BOARD LEADERSHIP

William Ward-Boas
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

“Serving on the Board means looking at VALID as a whole – ensuring strong governance, clear direction and accountability. We are committed to leading responsibly and strengthening the organisation for the future.”

VALID

We are introducing the people who help guide and govern VALID.

First up is William Ward-Boas, Chair of the VALID Board.

William brings more than seven years of experience in disability advocacy, with work spanning:

- Autism
- intellectual disability
- LGBTQIA+ advocacy
- government systems.

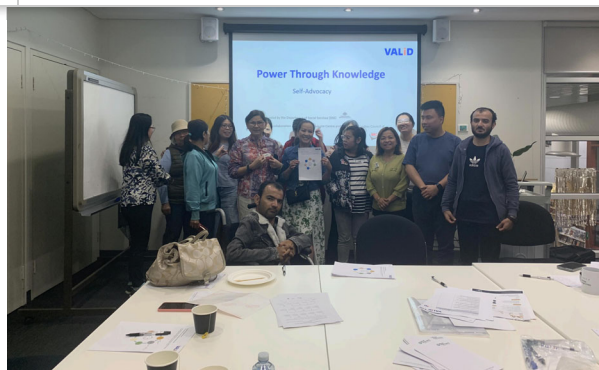
As Chair, he is focused on strong governance, clear direction and ensuring VALID continues to grow and lead responsibly.

Outside of Board meetings, William enjoys spending time at the beach, reading, watching TV and getting his nails done.

You can learn more about the people who guide VALID's work here:

<https://valid.org.au/about-us/board-management/>

Supported decision making workshops begin

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VALID's "I Can Decide In My Language" project has moved into the workshop stage with the Chinese community.

The team recently facilitated a pilot workshop on Supported Decision Making (SDM) for parents and carers. Participants explored what SDM is, why it matters and how it connects to the rights of people with disability.

Discussions focused on key rights, including the right to get support and information, the right to make decisions and the right to try new things and make mistakes. Conversations also explored duty of care, dignity of risk and the role culture plays in decision making.

The next stage of the project will involve workshops for people with disability as decision makers.

Learn more: <https://valid.org.au/i-can-decide-i-do-supported-decision-making-in-my-language/>

Research opportunity For young people with intellectual disabilities

A new research project from UNSW is inviting young people with intellectual disability to share their experiences of growing up and making decisions.

The study, **In Their Own Words**, is looking for participants who are:

- aged 12–28
- live in Australia.

Project activities include (online or in person):

- a one-hour interview

Or

- an interview with a photo activity.

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To learn more or get involved, contact:

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