

SCA (NSW) Board Gender Representation Policy

1. Purpose

This policy provides the framework by which the NSW division of Strata Community Association (SCA (NSW)) actively encourages representation at Board of Director level that appropriately represents the gender composition of both our SCA (NSW) members, and our customer base across NSW.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the SCA (NSW) Board of Directors (“the Board”) and current members of SCA (NSW).

3. Policy Statement

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, females currently make up 50.7% of the Australian population. Although SCA (NSW) does not currently collect gender statistics, anecdotal evidence suggests that female representation at Assistant Strata Manager and Strata Manager level within agencies throughout NSW is significantly higher than male representation.

However, that level of female representation is not reflected at the level of agency principal, business owner (whether sole trader or company director), nor at SCA (NSW) Board level.

The current SCA (NSW) Board feel strongly that the composition of the Board should reflect both our membership base and, more broadly, our customers across NSW. Clearly, currently this is not the case and pro-active work needs to be undertaken by the Board to ensure appropriate representation is achieved.

This policy aims to address underrepresentation of women on the SCA (NSW) board by providing an opportunity to “see behind the door” via a Board mentoring program thereby demystifying the inner workings of a board, and the roles and responsibilities of Board members.

SCA (NSW) recognises there are female strata professionals with pertinent experience, skills and capabilities who could be successful members of the Board. This Policy seeks to extend those numbers to assist in achieving gender parity.

4. Implementation

The Chair of the Education Sub-Committee of SCA (NSW) has overall responsibility for the implementation and review of the policy and procedures. The Secretariat of SCA (NSW) is responsible for effective communication of these to SCA (NSW) membership.

The President of SCA (NSW) will endorse the policy and ensure that its principles are effective regarding the SCA (NSW) Board.

5. Policy Requirements

5.1 SCA NSW Board Composition

Strata Community Association (NSW) is the peak body for the strata sector in New South Wales. SCA (NSW) represents over 3,000 strata managers, owners and suppliers in the sector.

The Board of SCA (NSW) consists of 11 elected representatives from Chapters representing:

- Licensed Strata managers;
- Associate Strata Managers;
- Strata Services; and
- Owners

5.2 SCA (NSW) Constitution

The SCA (NSW) Constitution stipulates that Board members are elected by the membership base via an open election. Change that would see Board positions made available exclusively for women (i.e. a quota or commitment to minimum female representation) would require constitutional amendment. Constitutional amendment is a long-term project requiring detailed strategic planning. Whilst not outside of the Board's consideration, the current Board does not have mandate for such a project.

Rather, with a focus on achieving rapid change, the Board is implementing a policy that encourages more women to nominate for election to the Board, with the intended result that more women will be elected to Board positions.

5.3 Strategy 2020-21

Those who nominate for and fill Board positions tend to come predominantly from senior levels within the industry – namely agency principals or senior executives of supplier members.

A significant majority of agency principals in NSW are male, thus most Board nominees and, ultimately Board members, are male.

Consultation conducted by the Board has revealed that women (whether principals/senior executives or otherwise) are reluctant to nominate for Board positions due to concerns about the perceived investment of time, as well as a lack of access to and experience of similar positions. Women working in the sector have communicated to the Board that if they had a greater understanding of what a Board position involves, they may feel more comfortable and confident about the nomination process and therefore more likely to seek nomination and stand for election.

With this in mind, the Board has agreed to implement a proactive strategy to increase the number of women who nominate for Board elections. This strategy introduces an optional SCA (NSW) Board Mentorship Program for people aspiring to an SCA (NSW) Board position.

Each year, strata professionals will be able to apply to participate in a mentoring program with current SCA (NSW) Board members. The program aims to demystify the inner workings of a board and the roles and responsibilities of Board members. Participants will receive mentoring from current Board members, and will be invited to attend several Board meetings as an observer.

The Program requires a minimum commitment of four meetings throughout the year with the allocated Board mentors along with attendance at a minimum of two scheduled SCA (NSW) Board Meetings or Board strategy meetings as an observer and participant.

At the end of the program, participants may choose to nominate for a Board position. That nomination may, but does not have to, come from the Board member mentors.

The Mentorship Program is open to both men and women however, whilst gender disparity exists at Board level, the Board may exercise “positive discrimination” in its selection of program participants. SCA (NSW) has been granted an exemption under section 126A of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 to provide a mentorship program for females only. Places on the mentorship program may therefore be offered exclusively to female applicants for a number of years in order to increase the number of female strata professionals who nominate for a Board position.

The Mentorship Program **is not** a mandatory pre-requisite for women (or anyone) wishing to nominate for election to the Board. It is an optional program for those wishing to gain a greater understanding of what a Board position involves. Those with previous board or executive experience may not feel the need to participate in the Program.

5.4 Target

The Board commits to a gender representation target of a minimum of 50% female nominees for Board positions by 2021.

5.5 Process

In September each year, the secretariat of SCA (NSW) will circulate the *SCA (NSW) Board Gender Representation Policy* and *SCA (NSW) Board Mentorship Program Application Form* to all SCA (NSW) members.

Applications for the Mentorship Program will be received throughout September and October.

Applications will be considered by the Board during its meeting in October and announced by November each year.

The criteria for consideration in selection of Mentorship Program participants is set out below. The Board considers this criteria to set a reasonable and not overly onerous standard for any strata professional seeking ultimate election to a Board position:

- Current membership of SCA (NSW)
- Absence of upheld conduct complaints in the past 3 years to the SCA (NSW) Code of Conduct Committee
- Commitment to furthering the interests of the Strata industry as demonstrated by **any two or more** of the following:
 - involvement and participation in SCA (NSW) events
 - participation in the SCA (NSW) professional development pathway
 - sponsorship of SCA (NSW) events
 - Holding a leadership position within your strata agency or supplier company
- Specialist skills, knowledge or experience that will benefit the Board in innovating, creating and driving initiatives to benefit SCA (NSW) members and our customers across NSW.

To express interest in the Board Mentorship Program, members should complete the **SCA (NSW) Board Mentorship Program Application Form** and send it to:

The General Manager, SCA (NSW)