

# CHOICE BOARD

## Election of Directors

### THE CHOICE BOARD

The Directors of the CHOICE Board are responsible for working with the CEO and the management team to set the strategic direction of the organisation to best meet its purpose, oversee its finances, manage risk and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

The Board maintains a skills matrix for the Board. The matrix identifies the skills mix required for the Board, identifies each Board member's skills and experience and ensures the Board as a whole has the skills required for CHOICE to meet its strategic priorities over the coming two to three years.

Under the CHOICE Constitution, all Board members must have:

- governance skills and experience commensurate with serving on the CHOICE Board
- a high degree of freedom from the potential for conflicts of interest, particularly having regard to CHOICE's reputation as an independent and unbiased consumer organisation.

The Board has also determined that all Board members would benefit from experience of social enterprises such as CHOICE.

In addition to these skills and experience, each year the Board identifies gaps in the skills matrix and seeks nominations from members with those identified skills.

For 2023 the Board requested nominations from members with the following skills:

- **Digital content, products and services:** Skills and experience in growing new and existing products and audiences for digital channels.
- **Policy, campaigning and/or not-for-profit:** Demonstrated skills in policy, campaigning and/or experience in relevant not-for-profit organisations, along with strong political acumen.
- **Consumer focus:** Experience in strategies to address the needs of communities that are at particular risk of exploitation, especially in relation to their consumer rights.
- **Technology:** Experience in leading technology strategy and delivery to support digital products and services and/or overseeing major technological changes. Ideally at a senior level in a number of medium to large organisations.

The Board looks for depth of experience and skills within these areas identified, and therefore does not expect directors/candidates to have skills in every area.

Candidates are elected for a term of up to three years. High-performing directors are expected to serve two terms and generally no more than three terms. If sitting directors wish to re-stand they are subject to a performance evaluation. You can view profiles of current Board members on the CHOICE website at [choice.com.au/governance](https://choice.com.au/governance).

## ASSESSMENT OF CANDIDATES

Information about each candidate relative to the skills and experience identified as required by the Board, is provided as part of this ballot information. The candidates' skills and experience were assessed by a Nominations Committee established by the Board comprising;

- Nic Cola – Co-Chair of the Board and acting as Chair of the Nominations Committee,
- Fiona Guthrie – an existing director not standing for re-election and,
- Bill Davidson – a non-director voting member with significant governance experience.

Consistent with its role under the Constitution, the Nominations Committee reviewed the nominations of nine candidates which included a nomination form and CV and conducted interviews with all of the nominees, including the directors seeking re-election.

Based on the information provided and the interviews, the Nominations Committee provided advice to the Board on the degree to which it considered each candidate met the criteria identified as required by the Board.

Following their interviews, three candidates have withdrawn their nominations so are not represented in the ballot.

The Committee was satisfied that all candidates are free from the potential for conflicts of interest.

The order of candidates on the ballot was randomly drawn by lot, overseen by the Company Secretary.

## DIRECTORS STANDING FOR RE-ELECTION

This year there are two directors seeking re-election at the end of their term, Fiona Jolly and Kat George. The CHOICE Board conducted a structured performance evaluation for these directors. Overall, both Fiona and Kat received positive feedback on their performance over their terms.

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

### Linda Przhedetsky

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lindaprzhedetsky/>

I'm a researcher, policy expert and advocate who is well-placed to support CHOICE in creating safe, just and fair markets. Having gotten my start in consumer policy at CHOICE, I led campaigns across energy, health, and data in the organisation between 2018-19. While at CHOICE, I had the opportunity to strengthen protections in Australia's Consumer Data Right legislation, which sparked my interest in how technologies impact consumers.

Fast forward to today, I specialise in how artificial intelligence can prevent people from accessing essential services. Specifically, I research how rental application technologies can unlawfully prevent people from accessing housing.

I'm experienced in identifying emerging consumer issues, developing cutting-edge research, and holding businesses to account. As a board member, I will be well-placed to help CHOICE make strategic decisions about policy and advocacy priorities.

In joining the CHOICE board, I'll ensure the organisation remains on the front foot in shaping debates on consumer issues. I'm eager to make sure the organisation remains relevant, brings in new, diverse audiences, and operates sustainably. Lastly, I love the organisation's special culture - I want to make sure that every CHOICE staff member feels supported, empowered, and engaged, just as I did during my time there.

### Marc Gauci

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/marc-gauci-823ab82/>

#### Career summary for Marc Gauci

An Executive Manager/ Business Development Leader with a track record of leading and delivering large complex multidiscipline ecommerce customer solutions for Merchants, Marketplaces and eCommerce platforms. Significant experience managing business development and sales teams covering solutions for e2e supply chain international and domestic, ecommerce and strategic partnerships. Expertise in complex integrations with the latest technology and a strong ability to manage and communicate with a diverse range of people and stakeholders. An ability to consistently deliver commercial outcomes across a range of sectors, with the confidence and agility to take-on any job relating to business development and ecommerce management.

An ambition to continue personal obsession with the customer and apply well-honed business development and eCommerce leadership skills to impact a business in positive ways. An appreciation of the need to understand and sell on value vs price and always focus on the commercial outcome, resulting in an approach that thinks ahead and anticipates problems, builds the right team, develops effective solutions and ensures that business priorities are achieved.

### Vijay Solanki

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/vijaysolanki/>

I have been brought up to have strong values when it comes to justice and equality. This comes from my upbringing in the UK as a young Indian often faced with inequality. Fortunately, I've rarely had to deal with serious diversity issues since moving to Australia, but I still feel strongly about society getting a fair and transparent deal. I have learnt to see this through the eyes of industry having held senior marketing & innovation roles in companies like Unilever, Philips, BlackBerry and various media companies in both the UK and Australia.

My passion for consumer equality along with my insight into consumer product and service companies makes me well equipped to help CHOICE. I have served as CEO of the digital advertising industry body (IAB Australia) so I can bring digital & innovation knowledge to CHOICE as well as my understanding of marketing, government and governance (I've completed the AICD program). I have also worked for NFPs like Culture 24 in the UK where we helped museums and galleries make better use of digital technologies. I'm confident that I can help CHOICE with a strong digital, marketing & consumer product/content perspective.

### Melissa King

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/melissa-king-10007b8/>

I am eager to join the CHOICE Board due to our shared commitment to consumer advocacy. My experience in governance, transformative leadership, and community engagement aligns well with CHOICE's values. I am driven to amplify consumer voices and ensure fair treatment.

As a seasoned leader, I bring a strategic mindset, innovation-driven approach, and a track record of fostering collaboration in my roles across arts, not for profit and major events. I am inspired by CHOICE's mission to drive positive change, and I'm excited to contribute my skills in governance, stakeholder engagement, business, IT and digital transformation and strategic leadership to support this goal.

My alignment with CHOICE's values of truth-seeking, collaboration, and impact-driven change reflects my dedication to ethical leadership. I am confident that my experience and values make me a valuable addition to the CHOICE Board, where I aim to contribute to meaningful initiatives that empower consumers and promote fairness.

## CANDIDATES (cont)

### Kat George\*

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kat-george-07359915b/>

I am standing for re-election to the CHOICE Board because I am passionate about economic and social inclusion, beginning with consumer protection. Through my work in essential services, and academic research into competition and new technologies, I have seen how business practice can contribute to unfair outcomes for consumers. Whether through algorithmic price discrimination, or complex and inaccessible information, I believe that transparency, accessibility and inclusion are often neglected. I am especially concerned about the risks for consumers experiencing vulnerability and the increased harm these consumers are exposed to in unequal marketplaces. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis in new and frightening ways.

I am a values driven leader, and I am experienced in complex consumer policy and advocacy. I am adept at strategic thinking, and dedicated to systems- thinking to drive solutions that take into account the intersections at which consumers are at risk of harm. I can bring this strategic policy thinking, experience as a not-for-profit Board Director, and passion for fair, just and safe markets to CHOICE. I am committed to policy with positive community impact, and hope to continue to use my skills to affect changes that benefit all consumers.

### Fiona Jolly\*

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/fionajolly/>

My name is Fiona Jolly. I have had the privilege of serving on the CHOICE Board since 2020 and would be pleased to be elected for another term.

I have four boys (2 adults and 2 at high school) and live in regional NSW, just outside the ACT. I have been a member of CHOICE since 1994 and am a Legal practitioner, Non-Executive Director and CEO. I would like to continue on the CHOICE Board to help guide CHOICE through a significant period of technological change and assist it to meet the challenges of an increasingly digital environment.

I bring policy development, advocacy, lobbying and regulatory affairs expertise to the Board. As CEO for 15 years of Ad Standards, Australia's advertising self-regulation body, I understand the concerns of the Australian community on marketing and advertising issues. I also understand government policy and compliance, having worked for many years as a government lawyer.

I have strong governance experience with not for profit member-based organisations operating for the benefit of consumers and communities - including the Rural Financial Counselling Service, the Cemeteries and Crematoria Authority ACT, the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors and, in my youth, as national President of YWCA Australia.

\*Existing Director

The logo for CHOICE, featuring the word "CHOICE" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The letter "O" is stylized with a horizontal line passing through its center. The logo is set against a solid blue rectangular background.

## DEGREE TO WHICH CANDIDATES MEET CRITERIA (out of 5 stars)

		Linda Przhedetsky	Marc Gauci	Vijay Solanki	Melissa King	Kat George*	Fiona Jolly*
GOVERNANCE/ BOARD EXPERIENCE	Governance skills and experience	★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★★
	Experience of social enterprises such as CHOICE	★★★★↓	★	★★	★★★★↓	★★★★★	★★★★★
SPECIAL EXPERTISE	Digital content, products and services	★★	★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★↓	★★★★↓
	Consumer Focus	★★★★★	★	★	★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★
	Policy and campaigning	★★★★★	★★★★↓	★	★★★★↓	★★★★★★↓	★★★★↓
	Technology	★	★★★★↓	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★↓

\*Existing Director

## HOW TO VOTE

### HOW TO VOTE ONLINE

You are invited to vote in the CHOICE Board election.

This year six candidates have nominated for three positions on the CHOICE Board. Two positions have been vacated by existing Directors whose terms have expired and who wish to stand for re-election.

**STEP 1** Read the statements provided by the candidates and their areas of expertise to help with your decision. To help ensure a balanced Board, we have provided information about the degree to which each candidate meets the criteria identified by the Board in the matrix above.

**STEP 2** Follow the link provided in the email which was sent to you with the subject line – “Your invitation: CHOICE Board election, AGM and Consumer Forum 2023” – logging in with the username and password provided in the email.

There are three vacancies. You can vote for up to three candidates by selecting the candidate(s) you want to elect. Please be aware that once you submit your online ballot you are unable to change your selection.

The deadline for completion of your online ballot is 5pm on Saturday 25 November 2023.

Results of the ballot will be announced at the AGM on Tuesday 28 November 2023.

**CHOICE**