

MEDIA RELEASE

16 JULY 2021

The Board of Deaf Australia is pleased to announce the appointment of Jen Blyth as our new Chief Executive after an extensive search and recruitment process.

In May, Deaf Australia announced that they were seeking to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer, and after an extensive search, have selected a candidate who is highly qualified with strong experience in advocacy and project management, particularly in relation to disability and human rights.

Jen has worked within the deaf and disability sectors for the last decade and half. She is a dedicated international and domestic development practitioner with a passion for inclusive development, especially for Deaf people. She has worked with deaf people, communities, and Deaf Associations within the Asia-Pacific. She is a strong advocate in undertaking a rights-based approach in intersectionality and diversity within communities both nationally and internationally.

Jen previously worked as an Advisor within the International Advisory Group with CBM Australia, where she was working to promote disability inclusion in the international development sector, including through training and capacity-building with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs), managing contractors and other development actors; preparation of advice and analysis materials; research and analysis of policy issues related to disability inclusion and other intersectional identities; technical advice on disability inclusive design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and support for Disabled People's Organisations in Asia and the Pacific.

Historically, she has worked as:

- Advocacy Manager with Deaf Victoria where she managed and provided advocacy services on both individual and systemic level for all deaf and hard of hearing Victorians.
- Conference Interpreting Coordinator at National Auslan Conference.
- Disability Advocacy Program Manager in Micronesia under the Australian Volunteer Program.

She has also been involved in writing a number of journals and articles for publication such as:

1. Experience of people with disability during COVID-19 in Asia and Pacific
2. Out of the Margins: An intersectional analysis of disability and diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristic in humanitarian and development contexts
3. Leading from the intersections
4. Hearing what one Deaf Woman has to say

She previously was a council member of VCD, a committee member of the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission Disability Reference group, ASLIA Committee member, and Victorian Council of Deaf People (VCOD, now Deaf Victoria) board member.

Jen's focus for 2021 and beyond is to work with the Board to review our road map (strategic plan), work with the team to continue to deliver projects, build relationships with our main stakeholders

across government, and organisations both within the disability and deaf sectors, and most importantly with Deaf organisations and the Deaf Community.

Jen Blyth will start on 9 August 2021 and we know that with this leadership, the future of Deaf Australia is bright.

Our thanks to the Deaf Community for your continued support of the work we do and we look forward to sharing this exciting new chapter with you.

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Media Contact:

Debra Swann - Chairperson
0400280217 (text only) – chairperson(at)deafaustalia.org.au

About Deaf Australia:

Deaf Australia is for all deaf, hard of hearing and non-deaf people and organisations (not-for-profit, for profit or government) that use and/or accept and respect Auslan (Australian Sign Language).

Deaf Australia is the deaf-led peak organisation representing deaf people in Australia. We promote the advancement of human rights and equality for deaf people by collaborating with our members and stakeholders in implementing the United Nations Conventions and the National Disability Strategy.

Deaf Australia is a national representative member to the World Federation of the Deaf (www.wfdeaf.org).

Web: deafaustalia.org.au
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