

# Stand for your community this December – diversity counts



The NSW Government is encouraging people from all walks of life to stand for their community and run for election to their local council as part of a new campaign to increase diversity in local government.

The *Stand for Your Community – Diversity Counts* campaign aims to increase the number of candidates from under-represented groups at the 4 December 2021 council elections.

With your support we can increase diversity of councillors in our state's 128 local councils and make them more representative of the communities they serve.

## Why we need more diversity in local government

Strong, effective councils are those that reflect the diverse communities they serve and represent.

- Women represent less than a third of all councillors in NSW despite making up more than half of the state's population
- Under 30s are the most under-represented

age category, with only 4% elected as councillors, despite comprising 16% of the population

- Just 24 of the state's 1,293 councillors identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Over one-quarter of households in NSW speak a language other than English but linguistically diverse people make up just 8% of all councillors.

Current and former councillors from diverse backgrounds have made extraordinary contributions to their local councils and communities.

We need more people just like them among the ranks of our local government sector.

## You can make a difference and stand for your community

We want local councils to be representative of the communities they represent and serve.

That's why we are calling on people from all walks of life to stand for their community this December.

Indigenous Australians, women, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, young people, and people with disability are encouraged to run for their local council on December 4.

Local government elections

4 December 2021

[www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)

## What councils do

Local councils are the level of government closest to the community.

They provide key infrastructure, facilities and services to local residents and are integral to improving the lifestyle and amenity of local communities.

## What a councillor does

Councillors represent their local community's needs, wants and aspirations.

Elected representatives make important decisions on behalf of their local community.

They help make sure our suburbs, town and cities grow and prosper.

## Why you should become a councillor

Local government offers an exciting and rewarding career working with local residents and businesses and making a real difference to your local community.

We need people from all walks of life to represent their local communities.

By making our councils more diverse, we have the opportunity to bring more views and perspectives to the table and better reflect our communities.

This will make our local communities better places to live, work and play.

## What qualities does a successful councillor need?

You don't need any formal qualifications to be a councillor.

However, you do need to be ethical, open and honest.

It also helps if you:

- are keen to learn
- have good communication skills
- can efficiently manage your time

- have good organisational skills
- are good at problem solving
- can work as part of a team.

It's also important to talk to your family and friends about how you would balance your work and personal commitments. Councillors need to read council business papers, attend meetings and represent their council at events.

## Training and support you will receive if elected

The NSW Government has introduced mandatory induction and professional development training for councillors.

Councillors will benefit from induction training after the election and an ongoing professional development program over the term to help them acquire and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their roles.

The training programs are designed to ensure mayors and councillors understand their responsibilities and are supported to perform their roles effectively.

Councillors also receive an annual fee and can be paid superannuation from their council.

Councils also provide equipment and expenses to help councillors carry out their role. These can include computers, telephones, travel, conferences, and expenses to care for dependents such as children.

## How you can stand for election

You must be:

- at least 18 years old and an Australian citizen
- live or own, lease or occupy property in the council area
- be on the electoral roll for the council area.

The NSW Electoral Commission can provide information about requirements for election nominations and running a campaign.

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## More information

NSW Office of Local Government

[www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)

NSW Electoral Commission

[www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au)

Local Government NSW

[www.lgnsw.org.au](http://www.lgnsw.org.au)

