

Cynthia Cliff



Background:

I have been privileged to serve on the RACI Board, and Finance and Risk Committee since the end of 2018. I am a Chartered member (MRACI CChem) having started out as a student member in the School of Chemistry at ANU. After a PhD investigating nitrene insertion reactions with Gurnos Jones in the UK, chemistry became the springboard for:

- A career encompassing extensive business leadership experience in university, government, private, and not-for-profit organisations engaged in consumer advocacy, publishing, education policy, research, technology and social change, and health.
- A lifelong passion for informal and formal learning. I am a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD), a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK, and hold a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (with Distinction) (QUT), a Graduate Diploma in Outdoor Education (BCAE), Graduate Diploma in Environmental Studies (Macquarie University), Doctor of Philosophy (Keele University, UK), and Bachelor of Science (Hons) (ANU). To stay in touch with the “lived experience” of new early and mid-career academics joining QUT I have recently completed the Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice alongside them.

In my current role as Director (Knowledge Transfer & Partnership Development) in the Faculty of Health at QUT I am responsible for driving innovation at the university-industry interface.

RACI Direction:

When the COVID crisis hit, it was very quickly clear that member-based organisations like RACI with significant events exposure, could be extremely vulnerable. As a Board we were very concerned for the future and opted to increase our contribution to organisational agility and responsiveness by adopting a fortnightly Zoom meeting schedule that still continues.

As a newish Board member, I had arrived excited about the opportunities for continued innovation to build both member engagement and organisational strength and vibrancy. I was well placed to contribute both energy and insight to the RACI Board’s role in this including:

- Relevant Board qualifications (GAICD) and experience with membership-based organisations, including the Board of parkrun Australia, as well as 10 years on the Board of the Australian Consumers’ Association (Choice Magazine) where I was also a member of the Audit and Governance Committee, and the Finance Committee. I also established and chaired parkrun’s Constitution Review Committee.
- Extensive experience in the facilitation of growth and development through engagement and cross disciplinary collaboration between national and international industry, government, and academic organisations.
- Knowledge and experience to contribute fresh perspectives on exciting possibilities (and warning signs) for organisational development presented by the impact of rapid technology and social change.

Now, having experienced my first term as an RACI Board member, I am amazed, excited and incredibly enthusiastic about what the future holds for RACI. The generosity, creativity, and engagement of RACI’s members and staff in response to the COVID crisis has been absolutely astounding, and heart-warming. RACI’s profile and relevance have benefited enormously. I am keen to continue my contribution to building a vibrant, resilient and future-focused RACI.