



Board Pack

Grok Academy
Non-Executive Director

August 2022

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL



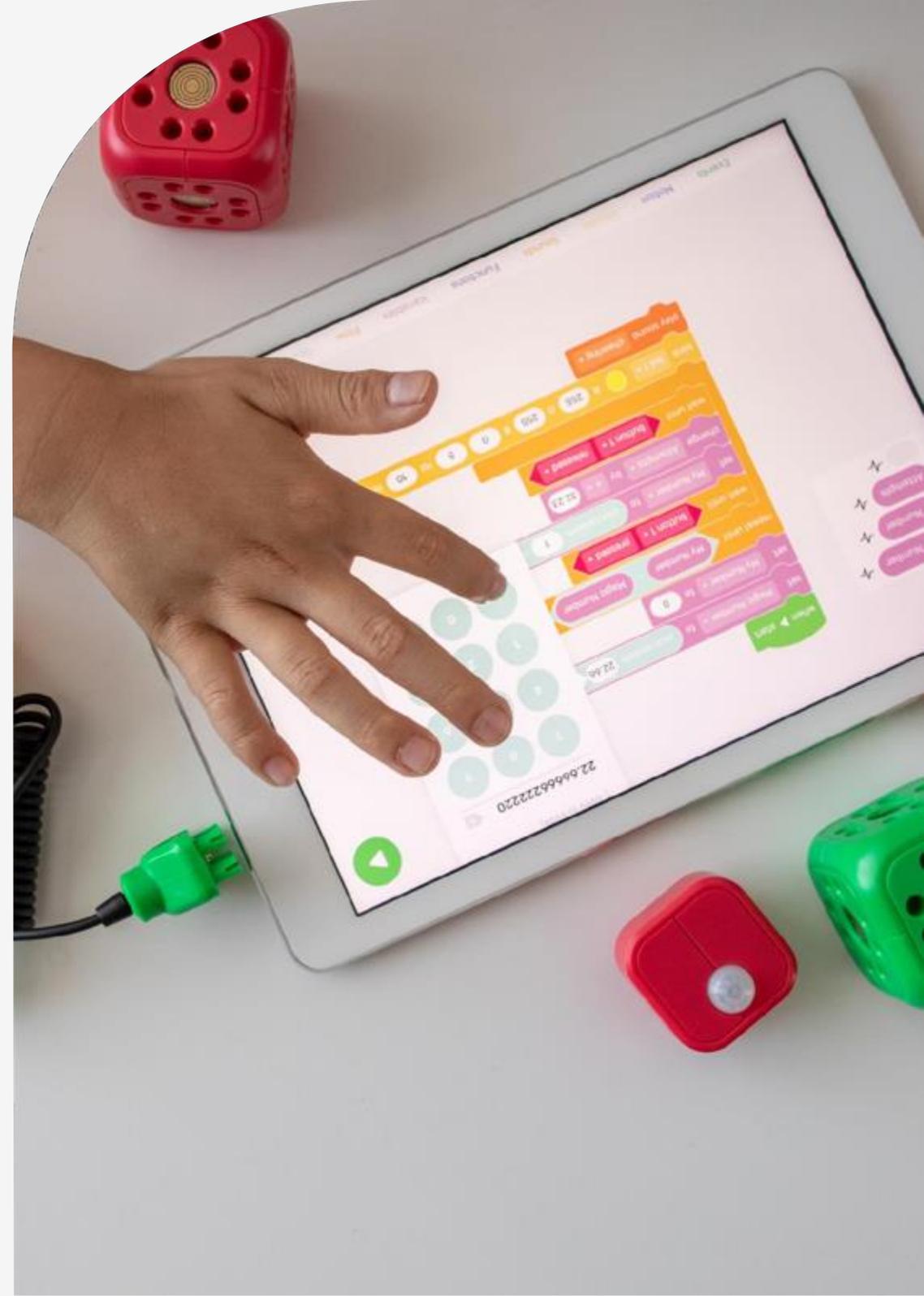
Context

Grok Academy is an Australian educational tech charity that aims to educate all learners in transformative computing knowledge and skills, empowering them to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the future.

After a recent, game-changing increase in long-term funding, the organisation is set to grow in size and impact, and the Board of Grok Academy is looking to appoint additional board members to consolidate and improve its ability to lead this transformation.

The Board is ideally seeking two new Non-Member Directors with a depth of commercial experience, preferably in financial or investment management, combined with sound strategic management, a commitment to quality governance and an understanding of the for-purpose legal and regulatory environment.

This is an outstanding opportunity to join a visionary board of change makers seeking to transform digital learning at the systems level.



Grok Academy – Context and Values

Purpose & Strategy

Grok Academy's purpose is to educate all learners in transformative computing skills, knowledge and dispositions, empowering them to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the future. Computing encompasses basic digital literacy through to advanced computer science and related disciplines, and the application of these skills across all disciplines.

Grok aims to achieve its purpose by:

- researching, developing and delivering educational technology for computing;
- undertaking scientific research into computing education and pedagogy;
- designing and delivering educational resources and programmes in computing;
- teaching and learning in computing
- training and supporting educators in computing and its pedagogy;
- providing intellectual, technical, and practical leadership in computing education;
- providing expertise and consulting for computing curricula and their implementation;
- integrating the teaching of computing across all disciplines; and
- advocating for computing education for all learners, especially under-represented groups.
- any other activity that contributes to furthering the purpose.

Together with its volunteers, stakeholders, and employees Grok is committed to empowering all learners to develop and apply their computing skills.

Priorities

The COVID-19 pandemic created both opportunities and risks for Grok. Extended lockdowns in NSW and Victoria saw educational customers (schools and universities) pivot and rely on online learning to deliver education to their students. This created increased opportunities for Grok and delivered new customers. In 2022, Grok is seeking to further strengthen its position in the market by consolidating these new customers and delivering educational programmes focused on cyber security.

More recently, Grok has focused on further strengthening relationships with its corporate partners and sponsors to secure funding for additional stages of our current projects and seen success in securing grants from government. This has resulted in a large, game-changing philanthropic gift being made to the organisation, which has the potential to elevate Grok Academy to being an influential and important system actor and (longer term) to transform education and learning at the system level.



Grok Academy – The Approach

Grok's Phased Approach

Looking ahead, Grok Academy has developed a phased approach designed to maximise and deliver impact for the future:

- Start with Grok's area of expertise – Digital Technologies
 - Straddle primary and secondary to engage all schools and systems
 - Design platform/pedagogy/content for all learners from the beginning
 - Expand into other learning areas via Digital Literacy (DL) capability
 - DL should be taught and consolidated across all Learning Areas (LAs)
 - Reaches all secondary teachers, starting with Mathematics and Science
 - Complete coverage of the Australian Curriculum
 - Build on DL connections to complete coverage for other LAs
 - Cover Year 11-12 computing subjects in each jurisdiction
 - Expand to introductory tertiary material to extend advanced students
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Current Board

Prof. David Lowe

Chair and non-Executive Director

David is currently Professor of Software Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Sydney. He is the independent Chair of the Academic Boards for AITC and SPI, two private education providers focused on delivering postgraduate programmes.

Professor Lowe has published widely during his more than 20 year teaching career, including three textbooks.

Jasmine Chambers

Non-Executive Director

Jas Chambers works at the intersection of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), governance, policy and action with a passion for work that calls for collaborative approaches often in complex stakeholder contexts.

Commenced as a Director on 1 August 2021.

Dr James Curran

CEO and Executive Director

James is the CEO of Grok Academy and was formerly and Associate Professor in Computer Science at the University of Sydney. He is also a Director of the National Computer Science School, the largest computer science school outreach programme in Australia.

Prof. Sandra Milligan

Non-Executive Director

Sandra is currently the Director of the Assessment Research Centre at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne.

Commenced as a Director on 1 August 2021.

Prof. Shirley Alexander AM

Non-Executive Director

Shirley is Professor of Learning Technologies at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) where she is currently Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Education and Students); having previously held the positions of Director, Institute for Interactive Media and Learning and Dean, Faculty of Education.

Commenced as a Director on 1 August 2021.

Kylie Williams

Company Secretary

Kylie has held various management roles within the Grok Academy culminating in her current position of Company Secretary and Head of People and Customer.

Further information about directors is available on the organisation's [website](#).



Grok Academy - CEO

Dr James Curran



Dr. James Curran is the CEO of Grok Academy, a charity that combines Grok Learning and the Australian Computing Academy from the University of Sydney, where James was an Associate Professor in Computer Science.

Grok Academy's mission is to educate all learners in transformative computing skills, knowledge and dispositions, empowering them to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the future.

James is Director of the National Computer Science School, the largest computer science school outreach program in Australia. Last year, over 22,500 students and teachers participate in the 5-week NCSS Challenge.

James was a writer on the Australian Curriculum: Digital Technologies and consults with curriculum authorities around Australia. In 2014, James was named ICT Leader of the Year by the ICT Educators of NSW and the Australian Council for Computers in Education.



Governance

The Board of the Grok Academy governs overall direction and purpose, acting as the centrepiece of governance, fiduciary and overall responsibility for the academy.

Structure

The Grok Academy Limited is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNC). The Council is governed by a Board established under its [Constitution](#).

Composition

Under the terms of the Constitution, there must be a minimum of three Board Members and a maximum of 9 Board Members. The Board currently comprises 6 Directors and they are seeking to recruit additional directors to bring a broader range of skills to the Board.

There are currently two subcommittees – Audit and Finance Committee and a Remuneration Committee.

Tenure

The Board may appoint a director for such period as the Board may determine.

Frequency and Format of Board Meetings

Board meetings are held quarterly (mid to late March, June, Sept and December). Generally, meetings are held virtually, with a target to hold at least one face to face meeting per annum. Consideration is being given to 4 additional meetings per year.

Remuneration

All Non-Executive Directors volunteer their time, energy, professional and governance expertise to the Grok Academy. Directors are reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred in attending Board meetings and related business.



The opportunity – Non-Executive Directors

The primary aims of this position are to collectively govern with other Directors to:

- Set the vision, strategy and direction of the organisation.
- Monitor performance of the organisation and maintain ultimate accountability for the achievement of strategic goals.
- Ensure major risks are managed.
- Approve major capital expenditures.
- Appoint the CEO and ensure management succession is well planned.
- Approve remuneration policy.
- Sign off on accounts.
- Ensure all legislative and compliance obligations are met.
- Ensure ongoing financial viability of the organisation.
- Establish ethical standards.

Duties and expectations of Directors:

- Be familiar with the responsibilities and legal obligations of a Director, including the qualities of a Responsible Person as described by the ACNC.
- Act honestly, ethically, in good faith and to the best of their ability in the interests of Grok Academy. At all times exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in the exercise of their powers and in the discharge of their duties.
- Declare and manage conflicts of interest.
- Attend and participate in all Board meetings regularly, ensuring consideration of relevant papers and agenda items in anticipation of meetings.
- Participate on a sub-committee of the Board or a special purpose committee as required.
- Be suitably prepared and engage positively in Board discussion and support all decisions once they have been discussed and resolved by the Board.
- From time to time represent the organisation at local and national events.
- Ensure all confidentiality requests and privacy obligations are upheld.
- Be able to commit to approximately one day per month.



Key selection criteria – Non-Executive Directors

The two new Non-Executive Directors can be located anywhere in Australia and may bring specific expertise in any combination of the following:

Attributes and experience:

- Significant experience in strategic planning and business development to contribute to Grok's strategy through constructive questioning and suggestion and contribute to the effective decision making of the Board
- Financial expertise, including modelling, analysis and reporting, coupled with a strong commercial mindset
- Risk management, assessment, evaluation and reporting as well as business continuity and risk mitigation
- Extensive legal and regulatory experience and a strong commitment to good governance
- Significant experience in working as an effective board member, demonstrating curiosity and courage to ask questions and persist in robust discussion with Management and fellow Board members where necessary
- Knowledge and understanding of the Theory of Change in the for-purpose sector, would be desirable
- Experience in partnership building and stakeholder engagement

Plus exhibit:

- A demonstrated commitment to, and belief in, computing education
- Strategic thinking and clear decision-making; including the ability to focus on the big picture, while undertaking critical analysis, being objective and considering and integrating multiple perspectives
- An ability to work collaboratively with other Board members, valuing their contributions, while also bringing unique perspectives and insights
- A strong desire to be an active contributor with genuine interest in the organisation and its business
- A high degree of integrity
- Well-developed commercial judgment and instinct, demonstrating good business instinct and acumen and being able to assimilate and synthesis complex information
- Knowledge of a Director's responsibilities including an understanding of the role as well as the legal, ethical, fiduciary and financial responsibilities
- Well-developed legal knowledge and understanding to oversee compliance with numerous laws as well as understanding the individual Director's legal duties and responsibilities

Further information is available in Grok Academy's [Role Description](#)



Further information

Website

<https://grokacademy.org>

Grok Academy Ltd Constitution

https://acncpubfilesprodstorage.blob.core.windows.net/public/fcd022ab-d02a-eb11-bbf3-000d3ad1cd99-3bbdf054-be60-408a-b3e8-07f32dfa6aa5-Governing%20Document-f581e988-fb3d-ec11-8c62-002248110b41-GAL_Constitution_2021-07-12_final.pdf

Annual Information Statement

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/fcd022ab-d02a-eb11-bbf3-000d3ad1cd99/documents/7f5f8c0d-c563-ec11-8f8e-002248129e6e>

Consolidated Financial Statements 30 June 2021

https://acncpubfilesprodstorage.blob.core.windows.net/public/fcd022ab-d02a-eb11-bbf3-000d3ad1cd99-3bbdf054-be60-408a-b3e8-07f32dfa6aa5-Financial%20Report-08530806-c563-ec11-8f8e-0022481294f6-Grok_Academy_Financial_Report_Final_Signed.pdf



For more information



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