



## IPC GOVERNING BOARD BIOGRAPHIES

- Name: Robyn Smith OAM
- IPC position: Member at Large
- Elected: 2021
- Position (outside of IPC GB): Chief Executive Officer of Sport Inclusion Australia
- Nationality: Australian
- Languages spoken: English
- Social Media channels: [LinkedIn](#)



### **When and why did you first become involved in the Paralympic Movement?**

I started working in the sporting sector for athletes with a disability in 1991 and started working with the Australian Paralympic Federation in 1992 on a fundraising committee for the Australian team. Sport Inclusion Australia is a founding member of Paralympics Australia and we have been working closely together for over 30 years. My work consists of building capacity within the sporting sector in Australia to be inclusive, based on ability and choice.

### **What has been your career path?**

I started my career with a physical education degree and taught for five years before joining Sport Inclusion Australia. I have held the CEO role for 32 years, was elected to Virtus in 2011 as the Oceania Representative and Vice President in 2013. In 2019, I led the Organising Committee which delivered the Virtus Global Games in Brisbane for over 1,000 athletes from 47 countries. In 2021 I was elected the Chair of the Australian Sporting Alliance for people with a disability, which comprises all of the national sporting organisations representing disability, including Paralympics Australia.

### **What do you enjoy most about the role that you have on the IPC Governing Board?**

#### **INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE**

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Firstly, meeting stakeholders from so many regions, countries, International Federations and International Sport Organisations for the Disabled (IOSDs) during the campaign provided me with an overview of the Para family, which has helped me in the early stages of my Board role. I have enjoyed working with like minds and collectively attempting to changes lives through sport.

**What is your personal highlight(s) from all the Paralympic Games you have attended?**

For me the Paralympic Movement took a massive step after Sydney 2000, we worked so hard in the lead up to the Games on engagement strategies with schools and the public to sell tickets and then once the Games started you could hardly get a seat except at the athletics. Sydney Olympic Park was full of spectators and for me that was a turning point in the level of respect paid by the Australian public to elite athletes

**Why for you are the Paralympic Games the most transformational event on earth?**

The Paralympic Games represent excellence, showcase ability, demonstrate humanity on every level and, without doubt, change perceptions about what is possible. I have always said if you could bottle the essence of the Paralympic Movement, you would be incredibly rich.

**Beyond the Games, what are your passions?**

Working in this area has taken up over half my life so sport as a vehicle for social change has become my life passion. I played and coached netball at a high level and now I choose to coach junior teams in rural Victoria and talk about netball being the vehicle to cement them as female community leaders.

**Over the next decade, what changes would you like to see that would improve the lives of the 1.2 billion persons globally who have a disability?**

For Governments and key decision makers to understand that increasing resources to assist people with a disability to access to sport and physical activity experiences at all levels is not only a basic human right but delivers both social and economic impact. For every dollar spent there is an

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economic and social impact return. The Paralympic Movement has the best platform to promote this concept.

**Who for you embodies the Paralympic Movement?**

There are just far too many athletes to highlight one, but I must say I am incredibly impressed by Jitske Visser and not only is she an elite athlete but has risen to the top as an athlete representative

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