



INFORMATION KIT

FOR

FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS
PARKS AND ARBORETA

2021

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INTRODUCTION

The Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc (AAFBG) provides this Information Kit for Members and Affiliates in Australia and overseas.

The aim of the Kit is to provide a reference for established Friends' groups and to provide guidance in the formation of new Friends groups.

The Kit has been designed to assist Members to raise their profiles and to highlight the benefits of networking, promotion and connection, regardless of their location or size.

AAFBG welcomes suggestions for changes to the Kit and encourages Members to contact the Secretariat at info@friendsbotanicgardens.org.

SECTION A

Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc

a. History

In 1991 the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne invited representatives of Botanic Gardens throughout Victoria to a seminar to discuss matters of common interest. Some of those attending were Friends and some represented local authorities. The seminar was so successful that another was held in Melbourne the following year. There was strong support for the establishment of an umbrella organisation for Friends groups in that State and this led to the establishment of the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc in January 1993. The aim of the Association of Friends was to hold annual conferences and to publish a newsletter, *Campsis*, twice a year for the benefit of members

Annual conferences continued with different Friends' Groups hosting the event, giving the hosting Group the opportunity to involve appropriate local authorities, attract significant speakers, organise workshops, create opportunities for networking with other Friends' groups, Garden managers and staff, and the opportunity to view other Gardens and their operations.

In 2001 the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc became a national body, the Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc. The Association became the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc in 2015, with 58 members from all states and territories and 4 affiliate members from overseas. The newsletter was renamed *Eucalypt*.

b. Committee

The Rules of the Incorporated AAFBG place the responsibility of the running of the organisation onto a Management Committee consisting of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary/Public Officer and 4 to 8 Ordinary Members. All Committee members are nominated by members and elected at the next available Annual General Meeting.

c. Statement of Purpose

The purposes of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Incorporated (AAFBG) are:

- To encourage and support the growth of societies or associations interested in the conservation, development, wellbeing and public appreciation of Botanic Gardens
- To represent the interests of Friends of Botanic Gardens throughout Australia

To support these purposes AAFBG will endeavour to:

- a. Promote membership of the Association
- b. Facilitate communication, advocacy, information exchange and sharing of experiences
- c. Maintain a website for the benefit of members and other community groups
- d. Publish and disseminate among members and the community newsletters or other publications relating to the activities of the Association
- e. Identify potential funding opportunities for members
- f. Encourage members' involvement in the Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) regional events and other related seminars and conferences
- g. Build and maintain links with the national body representing Botanic Gardens
- h. Co-ordinate national conferences or arrange seminars, forums or any other events that may be desirable for the promotion of the purposes
- i. Appoint, employ or pay honoraria to persons as may be necessary or convenient for the purposes of AAFBG
- j. Do such other things as are conducive to, or incidental to, the attainment of the objects set out above

d. Publications

1. *Eucalypt* is the AAFBG's bi-annual magazine produced in May and November and provides a means by which the Association and its Members keep in touch. *Eucalypt* is also a source of news on the ideas, innovations, challenges, events, successes and failures of the members who contribute articles. Information from the Committee's activities, Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) and other matters of interest to Members are also included. Originally called *Campsis*, the newsletter was renamed in 2015 to coincide with AAFBG's new name and logo.

Members are notified well in advance of each publication, to prepare and forward their contributions for inclusion. Photographs and information about important calendar events are welcome. Contributions

are required by 30 March for the May issue and by 30 September for the November issue. Hard copies of the *Eucalypt* magazine are posted to financial Members.

All material for inclusion in *Eucalypt* should be sent to the AAFBG Editor at eucalyptar@gmail.com.

2. A fortnightly electronic *E-ucalypt News* is emailed to financial members on the 1st and 15th of each month. Short articles, notices of events, questions for members and general news which members would like to share should be sent to the AAFBG Administration Officer at info@friendsbotanicgardens.org

e. Website

The AAFBG website www.friendsbotanicgardens.org includes information about the Association, its Purposes and Rules, the latest edition of *Eucalypt*, an archive containing back issues of publications and a list of members with contact details and links to members' websites. The AAFBG website manager in 2021 is Wordsworth Communicating.

The website also offers Members a platform for promoting coming events and distributing Friends' newsletters. Send contributions to the AAFBG Administrative Officer at info@friendsbotanicgardens.org

If a Member does not have a website, AAFBG can provide a dedicated page for them on its website.

AAFBG invites relevant photos from members' Gardens, which could be used to refresh the site from time to time and offer members the opportunity to showcase their Gardens.

The website provides links to related organisations and useful information. Browsing other Members' websites is an excellent way to source and exchange information and ideas between groups.

f. Membership Benefits

Network - Participate - Promote - Advocate

AAFBG Members have the opportunity to:

NETWORK

- Have contact with others around the country with a common interest to share ideas, knowledge and information throughout Australia and overseas
- Be listed on AAFBG website
- Become an associate member of BGANZ, representing at regional seminars and study days
- Access Botanic Gardens Conservation International news and information

PARTICIPATE

- Receive and contribute to the AAFBG's *Eucalypt* magazine, and *Eucalypt e-News*
- Participate in the AAFBG Biennial Conference
- Be part of joint displays at public events
- Host a Conference to showcase their own Botanic Garden nationally

PROMOTE

- Post news of major events and photographs on the AAFBG website
- Disseminate individual Friends newsletters

ADVOCATE

- Advise and support Grant applications and proposals to Administration bodies
- Attend and contribute to other relevant seminars and conferences

g. Membership Application and Renewal Form can be sourced on the AAFBG website at www.friendsbotanicgardens.org.

SECTION B

Starting a New Friends Group

a. Botanic Garden Definition

The Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens has adopted the Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) definition of a botanic garden:

Botanic gardens hold documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, public display and education. Exploring the world of plants and their relationships, they aim to protect and sustain biodiversity for human wellbeing and the planet.

b. Start-up Checklist

Friends groups broadly aim to support, advocate and undertake activities for the benefit of their own particular botanic garden, park or arboretum. The establishment of an effective Friends group may include the following:

- Identify and recruit core support people
- Appoint an *ad hoc* steering committee to manage the process
- Call a public meeting to encourage community support
- Liaise with local authority or owner responsible for your Garden
 - Discuss aims and objectives
 - Canvas elected member support
 - Assess the response and likely degree of support
 - Ask that gardens' management be represented at your committee meetings
- Develop branding, such as name and logo
- Develop Constitution/Statement of Purposes and Rules (see below)

- Formal incorporation/registration of the business name
- Apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Arrange Insurance. Compare insurance options which include cover for volunteer members working or running activities in the Gardens and offsite
- Plan for the future
 - Identify your objectives
 - Develop a strategic plan which should be reviewed regularly
- Involve your members
 - Provide a space for 'interests/skills' on the membership application form
 - Contact relevant members and invite them to be involved/contribute
 - Train members to be voluntary guides to interpret Gardens to visitors
 - Start a plant propagation group
- Funding – identify all possibilities including:
 - Member subscriptions
 - Funds derived from activities organised by Friends' group
 - Community grants
 - Government grants
 - Sponsorships
 - Trust or public fund
- Promotion
 - Set up social media
 - Seek support and involvement of local press for free publicity
 - Identify contacts and set out a promotion plan
 - Produce and distribute brochure and website information of the gardens to the local tourism bodies
 - Join the local tourism organisation
 - Network and seek support from organisations or people with aligned interests such as;
 - Garden clubs
 - Plant societies
 - Landcare groups
 - Local nurseries
 - Service clubs
 - Influential individuals *eg* politicians
- Identify/promote your members
 - When working 'hands on' in the gardens
 - Holding events for the public in the gardens
 - Representing the Gardens/Friends at other venues.
- Promotional Options
 - Name badges

- Vests with Friends' logo
- Hat bands featuring logo or a uniform colour for guides
- An easily portable display board and/or banner with logo. Self-supporting signs are very useful at Gardens' events, conferences and expos.
- Digital information for Audio Visual which can be used for presentations etc

c. Purposes and Rules

The Statement of Purposes is a 'charter' or 'mission' which sets out what a group is aiming to achieve, how it intends to do so and what the collective 'beliefs' of the group will be. It is necessary to clearly set this out on paper. If seeking incorporation, a copy of the Statement of Purposes must accompany the incorporation application.

The Rules of a group govern the rights and responsibilities of the members as well as how the group will operate. Model Rules are available in the Associations' Incorporation Act. The name of the Act may vary slightly depending on which State or Territory the group is operating.

Groups can either adopt the Model Rules or vary them to suit their own particular needs but care must be taken to ensure that all the requirements of the Act are covered.

d. Incorporation

Incorporation provides protection for for community groups with minimum government involvement. Each Australian state has associations' legislation, which provides a system for community organisations to formalise their association in a manner recognised by law. In 2010, the Associations Incorporation Act was reviewed and updated along with the Model Rules. It was enacted in December 2012. The changes may vary in each state so careful attention should be paid to the new requirements and responsibilities

The advantages of Incorporation are:

- The liability of the members (including the office bearers) of the Association is limited. The members will, generally, not be liable personally for either the debts or liabilities of the association. (The officers of an unincorporated association will be personally liable for its obligations but this can, in some states and territories, be limited by insurance.)
- The Association can enter into contracts, sue (or be sued), buy or sell property, raise or borrow money and invest money, in its own name.
- The Association has perpetual succession. This means that property acquired by the association remains with the association regardless of changes in its membership.
- The Association has the capacity to act as trustee for a Friends' Public Fund for the receipt of tax-deductible donations to support the Gardens.
- Obligations include the lodgment of an annual return, notification of changes to Purposes or Rules, and associated costs.

Note: If changes to the Purposes or Rules are required, the Committee of Management must develop a special resolution to be passed at an Annual General Meeting or Special meeting. The changes must be approved by 75% of the members. The Notice of Meeting, resolution, minutes and completed “Application for Change” are then forwarded to Consumer Affairs or registering body for approval and confirmation.

For up-to-date information about incorporation in your state or territory, refer to the following:

ACT Access Canberra
www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au

NSW NSW Government Department of Fair Trading
www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

NT Northern Territory Government Department of Business
www.dob.nt.gov.au

Qld Office of Fair Trading
www.qld.gov.au/law/fair-trading

SA Government of South Australia Consumer & Business Services
www.cbs.sa.gov.au/wcm

Tas Tasmanian Government Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading
www.consumer.tas.gov.au/registrations

Vic Consumer Affairs Victoria
www.consumer.vic.gov.au

WA Department of Commerce
www.commerce.wa.gov.au

e. Responsibilities and regulatory requirements

Recent legislation has vastly changed the community volunteer group landscape making the task of volunteer groups managed by volunteer committees far more complex, demanding and costly, particularly for larger Friends groups.

The National Occupational Health and Safety Act

Identifies the restrictions, responsibilities and documentation and equipment required to provide a safe ‘work’ environment for members and for operating public events. A Friends OH&S plan needs to be developed possibly in consultation with the gardens’ management where available.

National Volunteer Act

Recently legislated, the Act documents a prescriptive list of the required operational structure for volunteer groups, *eg* roles and responsibilities, position descriptions, volunteer registration, training requirements, documentation of records *etc.*

For further information refer:

PILCH (Public Interest Law Clearing House)

www.pilch.org.au

Australian Taxation Office – Induction package for new Administrators

www.ato.gov.au

PILCH Legal Assistance for Community Organisations

www.pilchconnect.org.au

f. Relationship with Council/Responsible Authority

The following are general guidelines for developing a good working relationship with the local council, board or authority responsible for gardens’ management and in particular with the gardeners working on site.

First, an understanding of the conditions/situation at the gardens is necessary if shared goals are to be developed and achieved in an atmosphere of mutual respect. This may be formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Request an explanation about the current garden situation - such as:

- Gardens’ management
- Current maintenance, planting or watering regimes
- Any proposed maintenance or development projects
- Status of a master plan or conservation management plan
- Budget priorities which could be supported by Friends

Clearly define your objectives, your available skills, how you hope to support the gardens and the limitations of your support role.

Clarify gardens’ management expectations and identify regulations to be adhered to, such as Occupational Health & Safety.

Determine:

- What facilities are available for Friends’ use and at what hours
- The security arrangements
- Your spokesperson/s and with whom and how you communicate
- What practical support is available from gardens staff
- If ‘hands on work’ is planned, how is this to be negotiated
- What the insurance situation is, and will your members be covered

Communication:

- Provide Gardens’ authority with updates on your plans
- Request from management a list of project priorities
- Set a time frame on suitable support projects and complete them
- Distribute newsletter to gardens personnel and Council and/or department head
- Inform management of Friends’ events in the gardens and invite to attend
- Invite a gardener/s to do a talk or practical demonstration for a Friends’ meeting

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):

An MoU may be developed to establish the relationship between a Friends or Community group and gardens management or Council.

An MoU will typically establish a framework for the collaboration between the organisations and express the common goals or vision of the parties to the MOU. MoUs are generally non-binding in law.

In general, an MoU will not deal with the specific details of particular projects and is therefore usually more of a 'high level' agreement and is not legally binding.

If developing such an agreement, proceed carefully. Content will depend on the sort of relationship that would be mutually beneficial.

Refer to: www.pilch.org.au

g. Funding

Grants and Submissions

Friends groups, as 'not for profit' incorporated associations, have a number of grant opportunities available to them. The complexity of documentation required varies. The following may help with the selection of suitable grant schemes and completion of a successful grant submission.

To select a grant that is best 'fit' with your organization, location and planned activity:

- Clearly understand the purposes and objectives of your Friends' group
- Select a project that is in keeping with these objects and those of the gardens
- If necessary, liaise with the curator or the appropriate gardens person
- Projects with long-term benefits to the Friends, Gardens and community will often be favoured

Always:

- Check the grant 'website' for a list of the recipients of previous grants of this type – to clarify the type of projects being supported, the suitability of your project and the level of funds available
- Highlight the key words in the grant criteria and requirements
- Contact the grant coordinator and discuss your project
- Determine the type/amount of 'in kind' support that can be provided and by whom (Friends, gardens staff/another community group)
- Establish if a financial commitment is required from your group or if it can be provided in partnership with Garden authority. A dollar-for-dollar (or part dollar) contribution to the project cost increases the chances of success
- Check the attached 'grant completed' list before you seal the envelope
- Forward the complete submission by the due date

Only apply for grants:

- Which are a clear match with your project
- Where you can adequately meet the grant criteria and conditions
- Where you can confidently answer the grant questions asked

Completing the submission:

- Concise, well-chosen phrases that clearly describe your project, that focus on and capture the criteria and the key points, are more likely to be successful
- A garden's location map and a project site map identifying details
- Photographs and master plan where available, heritage references if needed
- Always provide detailed quotes for the work to be done
- Calculate the hours/\$ value of 'in kind' support
- Calculate amount you would like to receive - and a reduced amount that would still allow you to achieve the project, if requested
- Include 2 or more letters of support from varying sources other than gardens management. (Where the number of applicants and the quality of their submissions are high, individual grant amounts may be reduced.)

Grant sources

The list of grant options available can be sourced quite easily via the internet. The non-government sites usually have a 'community section'. If you discover a potentially useful grant too late, register your name for information on the next grant round. Examples are:

Local Councils

A range of arts & community project grants

Volunteer Small Equipment Grants - most useful for cameras, computers etc.

State Governments

Heritage Grants

Parks Management

Education

Museums

Community

Federal Government Websites

<https://www.communitygrants.gov.au>

<https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants>

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/grants-and-funding>

National Library of Australia (community heritage)

<https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants>

Non-Government Funds

Australian Garden History Society

Major Banks

Large Corporations, Trusts and Foundations, eg BHP Billiton Community Trust

Myer Foundation, Tattersalls Foundation, The Australia Foundation, Potter Foundation

Company websites list the grant criteria and the area of interest they support.

Public Funds or Tax Deductible Funds

A Public Fund is a fund established under Australian Tax Office (ATO) law specifically for the receipt of donations whereby the donor receives a tax-deductible receipt. There are a number of Public Funds categories applicable to the eligible applicant groups. These are known as 'Deductible Gift Recipients' (DGRs).

An ATO *GiftPack* for Deductible Recipients and Donors setting out the current requirements is available from the ATO the website

The following are a few explanations that may be of initial help.

A Fund is a Public Fund where:

- It is the intention of the founder that the public will contribute to the Fund
- The public or a significant part of it does contribute to the Fund
- The public participates in the administration of the Fund

(refer Tax Ruling IT2149, Bray (78ACT4179))

These conditions can be met by a Friends' Public Fund.

Incorporated Associations

The Friends of Botanic Gardens, as community non-profit incorporated organisations, have the capacity to establish and act as a Trustee for a Friends' Public Fund through their modified Committee Rules. Appointment of additional Trustees is then not necessary and the separate Trust Deed required becomes a much briefer document.

A separate bank account, ABN and a regular tax declaration is also required for the Fund.

The Type of Public Fund

Gifts to public gardens are tax deductible on the basis that Botanic Gardens are 'museums of living plants' (refer ATO Ruling IT2020 (1983))

On this basis, a Friends' Group can establish a tax deductible Public Fund for the benefit of a Botanic Garden in the ATO category, Ancillary Fund IT Act 1936 Sub-sections 78(4) & 78(5)

NB. Botanical Gardens, being "cultivated gardens and parks", do not qualify as 'environmental organisations' under ATO Environmental Public Fund categories.

The submission process to the ATO is quite prescriptive

Discuss your intention with your local ATO/ DGR submissions officer, and legal adviser.

h. Insurance

Insurance cover is necessary for members for accident or injury while working on Friends activities in the garden or arboretum (on site).

Public risk insurance is required for members' activities off site (bus trips/garden visits) and in liaison with gardens management for Friends' public events (music/plays in the gardens)

www.ourcommunity.com.au is an excellent resource for volunteer and not-for-profit organisations for insurance, incorporation and other matters.

Members may be insured in various ways:

- Individual group insurance with various insurance companies arranged by insurance brokers

- Large botanic gardens under Trust Management will have established cover
- Under their local Council's volunteer cover (for accident/injury on site)
- Under local Council volunteer cover, and public risk cover with an insurance company for off-site activities
- Institutions that provide cover for Garden-related bodies including Garden Clubs of Australia www.gardenclubs.org.au
- Insurance may be arranged through Allianz Australia Insurance Group under a National Landcare Insurance program that covers them for injury suffered whilst performing voluntary work only.

i. Membership

Attracting and retaining members is always a challenge: The ideas set out below may help.

Groups need to constantly play a pro-active role to attract new members and retain those they have.

It is important to check with your members on a regular basis by way of survey or suggestion box to ensure, wherever possible, that their expectations are being met and that your group is offering activities and volunteer opportunities that are of interest. Encourage members to make suggestions and come up with new ideas. Members' involvement and feeling of 'ownership' of the group will add to its vitality and success.

Attracting members

- Promote your group as a vibrant professional organisation
- Network. Make sure that the message about the importance of your purpose and activities is spread far and wide
- Maintain an up-to-date website with links to related groups, Facebook page, etc
- Prepare an attractive leaflet about your group. Make sure it is available in your Garden and elsewhere *eg* at public libraries and tourist destinations
- Set up group on Facebook or other form of social media
- Seek to promote your group at relevant outside exhibitions/shows *eg* environmental and horticultural shows
- Direct Mail and E-letters
 - Enter into joint mailing/emailing with similar interest groups and networks
 - Insert membership brochures in the mailings of other organisations
- Co-operative promotions
 - Special activities and functions with other interest groups: garden clubs
Horticultural societies, field naturalists, botanic artists, art and heritage
- Seek free publicity/editorial space in local newspapers and magazines
- Advertise in appropriate publications and in targeted areas
- Designate a committee member or appoint a sub-committee to be responsible for recruiting new members
- Offer a speaker to address community groups and organisations about your Garden and group
- Organize activities that will attract different prospective members into the fold
- Offer special privileges and benefits to members
- Hold 'Friends only' activities for special celebrations and events

- Membership attracting initiatives can be a co-operative effort between the Friends' group and the Botanic Gardens' management or the authority responsible for the gardens, *eg* local council
- Friends' material available at public contact points. *eg* Gardens entrance, shop, café
- Seasonal fliers at suitable locations
- Seek a presence to promote Friends at activities/exhibitions held in Gardens
- Promote interactive websites between Gardens' authority and Friends' group
- Conscious effort by responsible authority/Gardens' staff to promote Friends and its activities whenever opportunities arise

Retaining Members

- Of greatest importance is making members feel welcome, part of the group and appreciated when they attend Friends' activities
- Keep your members informed by email, Facebook, on-line forums
 - Provide a good quality newsletter
 - Provide information and results of projects, activities and developments
 - Feature a member or group in the newsletter
 - Hospitality
- Ensure volunteer tasks/skills used are worthwhile and that volunteer efforts are seen as beneficial to the group and the community
- Organise programs of substance in addition to regular publications, *eg* Botanical Art workshops, environmental lecture series, or recent plant research topics, using well-qualified speakers
- Retain a diversity of times and days for activities to suit all members

When members do not renew their membership, follow-up with a reminder letter or a friendly phone call. Seek to understand why membership is not being renewed.

j. Activities Ideas

Check websites and newsletters of AAFBG and its Members for ideas and results.

SECTION C

Supporting Your Garden

How much support and/or funds you can provide for your Garden will, to some extent, depend on the size of the Group's membership and the level of enthusiasm. Obviously, if the local community recognizes that the Garden is a valuable asset that should be protected and supported, this is to your Group's advantage.

Ways in which your Friends' Group might support your Garden

Advocacy is the most important role.

Friends of Botanic Gardens, as volunteers, are not subject to the limitations of employed gardens' management and staff and as such have the capacity to lobby politically, attract grants, raise funds, promote the gardens, provide public programs and education and generate considerable public support.

In many situations the remarkable effort of local Friends groups is the reason why the Gardens exist, rather than the reverse.

Autonomy is a great strength.

As an Incorporated Association, a Friends' group is a legally constituted organisation in its own right, able to make its own decisions and still work in a productive partnership with the Gardens' management.

While it is preferable for a Gardens' management representative to be 'in attendance' at most meetings, he/she does not have to be an elected member of the committee. The representative is able to contribute fully, be consulted for advice, guidance and recommendations.

Effective autonomy is publicly identified by being self-funded, using a Friends' logo and letterhead, newsletter, postal address, email, social media and website for all Friends' communications and most importantly having a designated spokesperson for public comment when required.

SECTION D

Sources of Help and Information

Australian Association of Friends of Friends of Botanic Gardens: www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens: www.anbg.gov/chabg

Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ): www.bganz.org.au

Directory of Australian Botanic Gardens: www.anbg.gov.au/chabg/bg-dir

Capital City Botanic Gardens:

Adelaide	www.botanicgardens.sa.gov.au
Brisbane	www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/facilities-recreation/parks-venues/parks/brisbane-botanic-gardens-
Canberra	www.anbg.gov.au/gardens/
Darwin	www.parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/botanic
Hobart	www.rtbg.tas.gov.au
Melbourne	www.rbg.vic.gov.au
Perth	www.bgpa.wa.gov.au
Sydney	www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au

Australian Garden History Society: www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Botanic Gardens Conservation International: www.bgci.org.uk/

The Eden Project, Cornwall, U.K. provides an interface between education and environment:
www.edenproject.com

Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand Inc (BGANZ)

Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand Inc (BGANZ) is an initiative of the Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens (CHABG). It is an incorporated not-for-profit association based in Canberra.

The objectives of BGANZ are;

- To be the chief body representing the interests of botanic gardens in Australia and New Zealand,
- To promote the interests and activities of Australian and New Zealand botanic gardens and botanic gardens generally, and
- To enhance the state of botanic gardens for the benefit of the community

The BGANZ governing Council was appointed in October 2005.

The BGANZ Council consists of a maximum of 14 members elected or appointed for a term of up to two years and including;

- One member from each State and Territory representing regional botanic gardens
- Two New Zealand botanic gardens' representatives
- Two members from Capital City Gardens

Membership of BGANZ is open to organizations and individuals. There are three classes of membership, namely;

- Institutional
- Individual
- Associate (*ie* other organizations such as Friends' groups)

Associate members may participate in the affairs of BGANZ but are unable to vote in any meeting or decision of the organization.

The Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens is a BGANZ Associate Member.

BGANZ offers greater opportunity for smaller botanic gardens, especially those in regional areas, to participate in the planning, organisation and information exchange so important to the progress, development and influence of botanic gardens.

AAFBG urges Members to attend appropriate BGANZ regional meetings (check with your local Council or authority responsible for your Garden as to when these are to be held in your region).

BGANZ Congresses are held every two years in conjunction with New Zealand members. BGANZ Regional Conferences are held every two years, in the non-Congress year.

BGANZ Newsletters are produced several times a year and contain a great deal of useful and interesting information.

BGEN (Botanic Gardens Education Network) is a recent innovation formed to develop and improve education across botanic gardens.

BGANZ Regional groups are BGANZQ (Queensland), BGANZ NSW and BGANZ Victoria. Regional workshops, study days and conferences are held regularly.

AAFBG is an Associate Member of BGANZ and has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with BGANZ to qualify our relationship and the parallel nature of our organisations and to share our resources.

Reciprocal arrangements have been made, particularly;

BGANZ is represented with an article our *Eucalypt* magazine and AAFBG can contribute to BGANZ journal *The Botanic Garden*.

An AAFBG Committee member receives a complimentary registration at BGANZ national conferences and has the opportunity to also address the delegates.

A BGANZ representative is offered the equivalent arrangement at AAFBG national conferences.

As an Associate member of BGANZ, the AAFBG has access to BGANZ resources and information. AAFBG encourages Friends groups to become Associate members of BGANZ for these advantages and to participate in regional BGANZ activities. Refer to www.bganz.org.au for further information about BGANZ.