

IT TAKES
A LITTLE 

Westpac Board Observer Program

Connecting for-purpose organisations
and experienced professionals through
a practical and immersive board experience.

In partnership with:

MinterEllison.  FUTURE
DIRECTORS.



Strengthening social sector governance. Developing future directors.

Now in its 10th year, the Westpac Board Observer Program connects experienced professionals from Westpac Group and MinterEllison with a select group of not-for-profit and social enterprise boards for a year long governance partnership.

Through a 12-month placement, Host Boards benefit from fresh perspectives, specialist expertise and broader networks, while Observers gain practical governance skills through an immersive boardroom experience, complemented by structured learning throughout the year.

Impact at a glance

81+ NPS

Board Observers

>21% ↑

in Board Observer confidence to take on a Director role and understanding of social impact after completing the program

63%

of Board Observers secured a director role (2025 graduates)

58+ NPS

Host Boards

89%

of Host Boards agreed the Observer added value through skills and perspective

Source: Independent Impact Study completed by Hube Social 2025 - 2026

Observers in the Boardroom

Observers are senior leaders from Westpac and MinterEllison who contribute to Board discussions and support governance priorities through their professional experience. During the 12-month placement, they may also become involved in committees, working groups, planning days or other agreed activities.

Observers participate in a non-voting capacity and are not Directors or officers of the organisation. They do not assume Director responsibilities, provide professional advice to the Board or make decisions on its behalf. Observers maintain confidentiality and contribute as individuals, rather than representatives of their employer

What's involved

For Host Boards

Host Boards welcome an Observer into their board environment, providing valuable exposure to governance within a for-purpose organisation. In turn, Boards gain fresh perspectives and access to the Observer's networks, professional experience and expertise in areas such as strategy, finance, risk, technology, legal, HR and more.

Through this partnership, Host Boards play an important role in helping develop board-ready professionals, contributing to a stronger pipeline of future directors for the social sector.

Benefits:

- Access new thinking and diverse professional experience and skills
- Strengthen governance and decision-making
- Expand organisational networks and connections
- Contribute to a pipeline of future board talent

Commitment

- Participate in a 12-month partnership with a Board Observer
- Include the Observer in Board meetings and agreed activities
- Provide information and context needed for meaningful participation
- Conduct Observer interviews to select those aligned with Board needs
- Participate in program check-ins and evaluation

For Board Observers

Board Observers join a purpose-led organisation for a 12-month placement, gaining valuable exposure to governance in practice and the realities of leading for impact. In turn, Observers contribute their professional experience, perspectives and curiosity in support of Board discussions and agreed organisational priorities.

Supported by structured learning throughout the year, the experience helps participants build the confidence, insights and practical experience needed to take on future board opportunities.

Benefits:

- Real-life exposure to board governance, decision-making and dynamics
- Structured learning program to complement boardroom exposure and networking opportunities
- Greater confidence for future board roles
- Exposure to the social sector and experienced directors

Commitment:

- Participate in a 12-month partnership with a Host Board
- Prepare for and attend Board meetings and, where agreed, contribute to other governance activities
- Complete the structured learning program
- Approach the placement with curiosity, humility and professionalism
- Respect confidentiality and the Host Organisation's mission
- Estimated time commitment is 4-5 hours per month

Next steps

Interested in participating as a Host Board or Board Observer? Refer to the information below and visit the relevant site for current application dates.

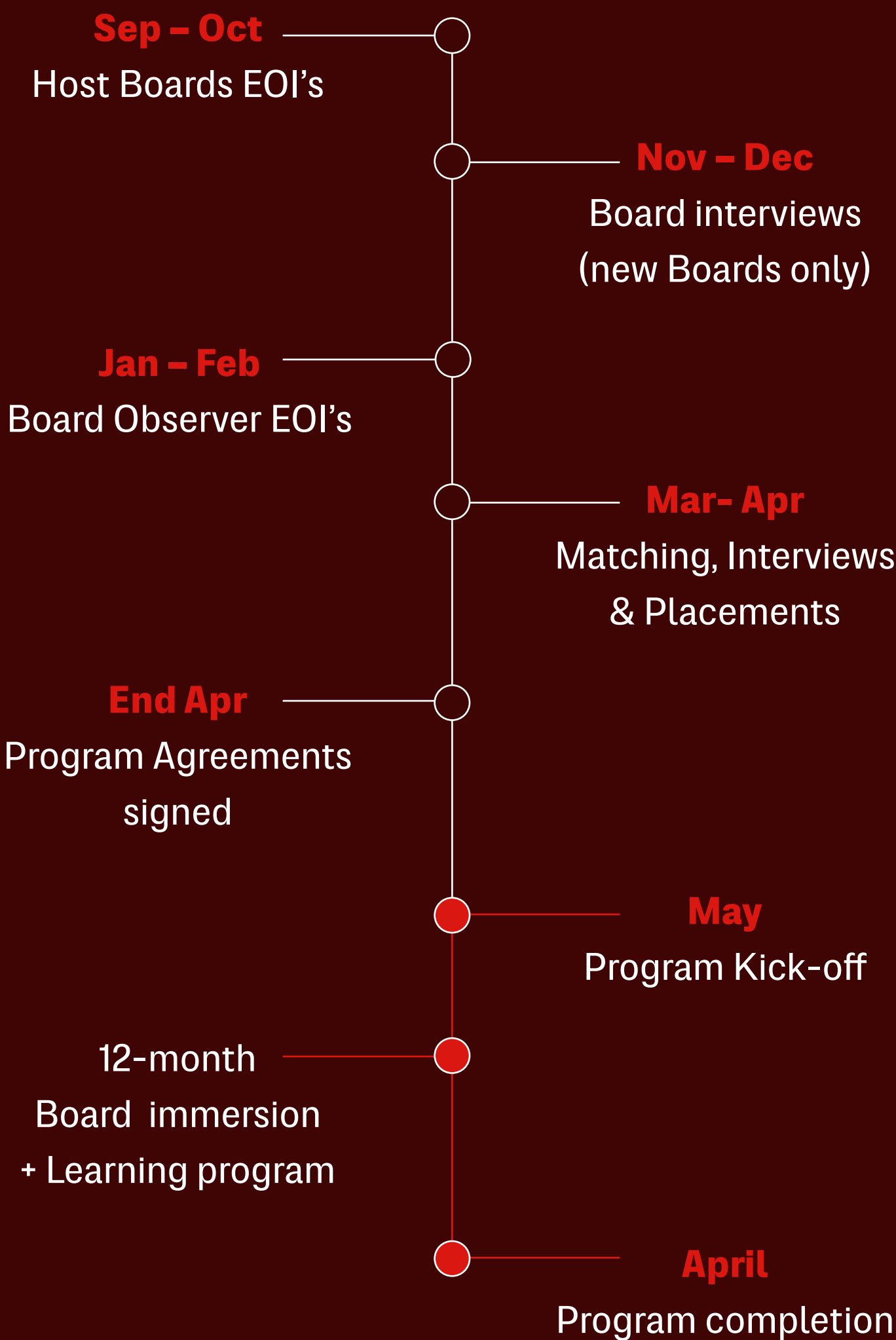
Host Boards

Visit Westpac Foundation

Board Observers

Visit MyW > Leadership Programs > Social Leadership

Program timing



“Having a Board Observer has increased organisational confidence, expanded our networks, and led to more in-kind and pro-bono support. This has helped us deliver better outcomes for our clients and community.”

– Host Board

“The Board Observer Program gave me a unique window into governance at a strategic level, which has reshaped how I show up in my own leadership role.”

– Board Observer