

DIAP

DISABILITY
INCLUSION
ACTION PLAN

2023 - 2028
Summary



**ARTS
HOUSE**

M CITY OF
MELBOURNE

Image: *The Dan Daw Show* by Dan Daw Creative Projects
Presented by Arts House and RISING 2023, Image credit: Shannyn Higgins

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	3
About this document	3
Alternative Formats	4
Language	4
Purpose	5
Who we are	6
Contributors	6
Budget commitment	6
Monitoring	6
Feedback	7
Contact us	8
Key Actions and Focus Areas	9
Focus Area 1: Culture and Employment	9
Focus Area 2: Learning and Training	10
Focus Area 3: Creative Program	11
Focus Area 4: Communication	12
Focus Area 5: Venue	13

Image: *The Birth and Death of a Physical Artist* by roya the destroy and Peter Sette, Commissioned by Arts House for The Warehouse Residency 2023, Image credit: Tiffany Garvie



Acknowledgement of Country

Arts House is located on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

About this document

This is the summary version of Arts House Disability Inclusion Action Plan. It includes an overview of key actions and focus areas.

You can also read the Plain Language or Detailed version of this plan which includes more information about actions, timeline and reporting.

This document was designed by George Thomas and Jacinta Oakley under the guidance of Dr Fayen d'Evie. The DIAP logo typeface was developed by a group of students from the Experimental Typography Workshop of the RMIT Master of Communication Design: George Thomas, Chen Bai, Jarred Keith Labrooy, Yu-Pei Chang, Thuy Chi Doan, Bowen Lang, Yew Qi Yap, and Sinae Yu. It was resolved to a brandmark by Chen Bai and Jarred Keith Labrooy.

Alternative Formats

[This plan is available in alternative formats on the Arts House website.](#)

There are PDF, Word, Summary, Easy English and Plain Language versions.

There is also an audio version and an Auslan video summary of this plan.

Language

- We will use the terms Deaf and Disabled people and person with a disability.
- Arts House's Access Advisory Group decided on the language used in this plan.
- We recognise a broad definition of disability, including physical disability, intellectual disability, neurodivergence, mental illness, chronic illness, cognitive disability, and sensory disability.
- We respect the varying ways Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people may wish to self-identity.
- In this DIAP we use 'Deaf' to respect the rights of the Deaf community that identify as part of a cultural and linguistic minority connected through their shared language, Auslan.
- Throughout this document, Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be abbreviated as DIAP or plan.

Purpose

The purpose of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to strive for a model of disability inclusion based in solidarity and Disability Justice. We want to ensure disability inclusion goes beyond compliance and competence. We recognise that Disabled people face multiple intersecting oppressions.

This plan will:

- Guide Arts House's work and make sure it's accessible, inclusive, and anti-ableist with actions that reduce barriers for Deaf and Disabled people.
- Inform Deaf and Disabled people on what to expect of Arts House's commitment to inclusivity and access.
- Commit Arts House to consultation and input from Deaf and Disabled community, respecting the knowledge, creativity, and expertise Disabled people bring.
- Embed a culture of improvement on disability inclusion, that ensures accountability to Deaf and Disabled communities, artists, audiences and staff.
- Commit to safe working environments for staff, artists, audiences and communities with regards to Covid-19 and other communicable diseases, ensuring disability and immuno-compromised communities are regularly consulted.

Who we are

- Arts House is a program of the City of Melbourne, based at North Melbourne Town Hall on Wurundjeri country.
- We support artists to connect with each other and to create and present new works.

Contributors

This plan has been developed through a co-design process with Deaf and Disabled consultants with co-facilitated sessions led by Arts Access Victoria and Arts House.

Budget commitment

- Arts House has a dedicated access budget with allocations to artist and audience services, creative access consultation, communications, production and advisory groups.
- Access is also built into each project budget and artists and companies are encouraged to prioritise fundraising for access expenses at the commencement of a project.

Monitoring

- Arts House is committed to seeking ongoing consultation and feedback from Deaf and Disabled communities throughout the implementation of this plan and its actions.

- The Arts House Access Working Group steers the implementation and review of actions at fortnightly working group meetings, as well as fortnightly Arts House team meetings.
- The group will report on actions every six months and meet annually with the Arts House Access Advisory Group, Arts Access Victoria and Creative Program Lead to review the actions and implementation of the plan.
- An annual summary and progress report in text and Auslan will be published on the Arts House website.

The DIAP will be comprehensively reviewed and revised every five years, following appropriate consultation processes with the Deaf and Disabled community and other relevant stakeholders.

Feedback

Arts House values community feedback on our progress in meeting the goals and actions outlined in this plan.

Feedback can be shared in the following ways:

1. [Online survey](#) (anonymous)
2. Providing feedback over the phone (03) 9322 3720 to Arts House reception.
3. Providing feedback in Auslan. Arts House can coordinate translation.
4. Emailing artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au with your feedback

Arts House will acknowledge receipt of all feedback. You are welcome to request a status update on your feedback and how it has been considered.

Contact us

Phone (03) 9322 3720

Email artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au

If you need help to speak or listen: Contact Arts House at the City of Melbourne through the National Relay Service or NRS.

Call the NRS help desk
1800 555 660

Go to the NRS website
communications.gov.au/accesshub/nr

Image: *Ruth Crow Walks* by Lorna Hannan and Hannah Morphy-Walsh, Commissioned by Arts House as part of Refuge 2021, Image credit: Anne Moffat

[« Back to navigation](#)



Key Actions and Focus Areas

Focus Area 1: Culture and Employment

Who Arts House employs and engages

- Arts House will increase the representation of Deaf and Disabled people among staff, contractors, casuals, consultants, and advisory and co-design groups.
- To achieve this goal we will review our hiring processes and reach out to Deaf and Disabled people when we are advertising a new role.
- We will also try to make our workplace safe and welcoming by:
 1. Talking to new staff about what they need
 2. Welcoming access requests and flexible working arrangements
 3. Advocating for a full time Access Coordinator role
 4. Being a safe venue for immunocompromised people

Focus Area 2: Learning and Training

How Arts House provides ongoing training and learning opportunities

- We will train all staff on what they need to know to create a safe and welcoming space for Deaf and Disabled people. This might include Deaf awareness, Autism awareness, competing access needs, Augmentative and Alternative Communication, cultural safety in a Disability context, basic Auslan, and mental health and trauma-informed work.
- We will make sure the training is delivered by Deaf and Disabled people.
- We will tell staff about the DIAP and support them to understand it.
- We will integrate training opportunities and workshops on access for artists in CultureLAB and The Warehouse Residency programs.

Focus Area 3: Creative Program

How Arts House applies principles of access and inclusion to the creative program

- We will commission more Deaf and Disabled artists through the Warehouse Residency and other programming pathways.
- We will work with all artists to make their presentations as accessible as possible.
- We will consult with Deaf and Disabled people before our Season launches to identify access services and promote performances to Deaf and Disabled communities.
- We will make our expressions of interest accessible by including:
 1. EOI support through disability partner organisations
 2. Information in a range of communication formats
 3. Soft deadlines and flexible submission dates where possible
 4. Ability to submit EOI in a range of communication formats including recorded meetings, audio, video, Auslan, text.
- We will keep offering digital programming.

Focus Area 4: Communication

Promote inclusion and participation in the community of Deaf and Disabled people

- We want to build trusting relationships with Deaf and Disabled artists and audiences.
- We will share information about programs with Deaf and Disabled people in ways that work for them, e.g. audio recordings, Auslan videos, plain language and Easy English.
- We will include access symbols, image descriptions, ALT text and closed captioning in all our publications.
- We will share detailed access information for all meetings, events, and venues including access keys, sensory maps, social stories, and meeting agendas.
- We will ask Deaf and Disabled people how we can be better at engaging Deaf and Disabled audiences.
- We will promote our work to people who aren't online too, with physical signs or flyers.
- We will make sure people can book affordable tickets in different ways including over the phone and online.

Focus Area 5: Venue

How Arts House works towards making its physical and online spaces accessible to artists and audiences

- We will advocate for accessible public transport and increased accessible parking to the venue.
- Make sure we have easily findable step-free entrances that people can use independently.
- We will update our signs to include braille.
- We will tell people what our opening hours are and where the entrances are on all our communication channels e.g. website, promotional materials, venue signs.
- We will maintain a quiet space where people can take a break.
- We will ask visitors how accessible our venue is and act on their feedback.
- We will adjust furniture in common spaces such as bar and kitchen to be accessible.
- We will increase safety for all people by improving ventilation and maintaining safe air quality standards in enclosed spaces where possible.



Image: *More Than Words Can Say* by Sam Martin and Catherine Dunn
Commissioned by Arts House through The Warehouse Residency 2022, Photo credit: Jacinta Oaten