

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

WHO WE ARE AND OUR PURPOSE

Metro Arts is Queensland's leading multi-arts incubator dedicated to the development of contemporary art and independent artists. Over our 40+ year history, Metro Arts has been a launch pad and provided ongoing support for career trajectories for some of Australia's finest artists across visual and performing arts.

At Metro Arts we work exclusively in contemporary art because these are the artforms of the future – these are the ones that will make new ways of seeing, thinking and feeling possible. This is the driving vision behind Metro Arts as a cultural organisation and the art we present. Nothing we do is safe or gently snuggling up to the status quo – that's not our job. Our job is contemporary art, live and living art, challenging and experimental and diverse art. These are the artforms which will articulate a new understanding and a new way forward.

PURPOSE

To development the future of Australian contemporary arts practice, now.

INSPIRATION

To position the arts and creative innovation at the centre of all we do.

VALUES

- We value artistic experimentation and risk.
- We value process over product.
- We value the artist.
- We value relevance.
- We value democratisation of access.

OUR PROGRAM

Our Annual Program has several facets that enact Metro Arts' Purpose, Inspiration and Values as outlined above. These facets span visual and performing arts, and provide support for the lifecycle of new work from research and development through to presentation, and include:

- Exhibition Program
- Artist in Residence Program
- Performance Program
- Creative Development Program

In addition, Metro Arts provides bespoke internships and mentorships for emerging artists, producers and curators through our partnerships with tertiary institutions, most notable of which is our Education Partnerships with TAFE Queensland and the University of Canberra.

OUR COMMITMENT

Metro Arts is committed to providing contemporary arts experiences for all members of our community – audiences and artists alike.

We aim to constantly improve our services for people with disability as participants and as audiences. The continuous development and ongoing implementation of this Disability Inclusion Action Plan is supported by Metro Arts' vision and values.

The performance indicators of this plan are reported to the Board and the Plan is reviewed every 12 months in conjunction with our annual programming and with reference to the ongoing review of performance against the Metro Arts Strategic Plan.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN

Metro Arts' annual program is based on a national callout supporting our value of 'democratisation of access'. As such, we work with a diverse range of artists and creatives some of whom have a disability. In adherence with *Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, Metro Arts recognises the diverse nature of our artists and audience with disability to include those living with physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, combined with other barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.¹

In this, Metro Arts supports the key vision of the *National Arts and Disability Strategy*² that 'the artistic aspirations and achievements of people with a disability are a valued and visible part of Australian culture.'

Metro Arts has been guided by key legislative and policy mechanisms within the Australian context. We have looked to training, research and other small-to-medium organisations for best practice guidance and intend to undertake regular consultative and review processes with our community members who identify as having a disability. This will see an annual round table discussion for current artists and community members (including audience and patrons) to highlight Metro Arts' performance against this plan and the wider inclusion objectives set forth within the Metro Arts Strategic Plan 2022-2025. The review process will form part of the organisations reporting against KPOs both internally and externally for key stakeholders including Government funding bodies.

As per our commitment outlined above, Metro Arts will review this Plan every 12 months in conjunction with our annual programming and with reference to the ongoing review of performance against the Metro Arts Strategic Plan.

¹ Preamble and Article 1: Purpose, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A copy of the Convention is available at <<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>>. The Convention was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the Australian Government signed the Convention on 30 March 2007 and Australia ratified the Convention on 17 July 2008.

² 2008, p 2.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

This Plan is guided by key International Conventions, Australian and State legislation, as well as supporting policies in both arts and broader social parameters.

Supporting Conventions and legislation include:

- *United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2008)
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Act 2013* (Cth)
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld)
- *Disability Services Act 2006* (Qld)

The rights protected under these legislative mechanisms are supported by the following key arts and cultural policies:

- National Arts and Disability Strategy (2009)
 - Discussion Paper National Arts and Disability Strategy: An initiative of the Meeting of Cultural Ministers (2018)
 - Key results of the 2018 public consultation National Arts and Disability Strategy: An initiative of the Meeting of Cultural Ministers (2019)
- The Australia Council for the Arts Disability Action Plan 2017-19
- Creative Together 2020-2030: A 10-year Roadmap for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland (2020)
 - Sustain 2020-2022: An action plan for Creative Together 2020-2030: A 10-year Roadmap for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland (2020)
- Creative Australia: National Cultural Policy (2013)

OBJECTIVES

The performance indicators outlined in this Disability Inclusion Action Plan are reported to the Board and is reviewed every 12 months in conjunction with key planning and strategic documents. The philosophy of this Plan directly aligns with Metro Arts' vision, inspiration and values.

Specific objectives align with core focus areas that are outlined by the *National Arts and Disability Strategy*.³ These areas are:

- **Access and Participation**
Strategies to address the barriers which prevent people with a disability from accessing and participating in the arts and cultural activities, both as audiences and participants.
- **Arts and Cultural Practice**
Strategies to address the barriers which prevent emerging and professional artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability from realising their ambitions.
- **Audience Development**

³ p 7.

Strategies for developing and growing audiences for work created by artists with a disability and disability arts organisations.

- **Strategic Development**

Strategies at a broader policy level to improve coordination and collaboration across all levels of government, empower people with a disability to have a stronger voice in policy development and planning, and support informed decision making.

Metro Arts outlines 3 Key Objectives with key Action items to support these focus areas.

OBJECTIVE 1: PROGRAM DELIVERY

Action 1: Program work that is created or devised by artists with disability.

Action 2: Seek to appoint an appropriately skilled artist with disability to the Metro Arts Artistic Advisory Group ('MAAAG').

Action 3: Develop alternative methods of participation in Metro Arts' Annual Program for artists with disability.

OBJECTIVE 2: STAFF COMPETENCY AND EMPLOYMENT

Action 1: Audit current staff and Board for disability awareness.

Action 2: Develop an ongoing training schedule in disability awareness for staff and Board.

Action 3: Reduce barriers to persons with disability obtaining and maintaining employment with Metro Arts.

OBJECTIVE 3: PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL ACCESS FOR ARTISTS AND PATRONS

Action 1: Develop methodology for collating audience demographics to capture numbers of disabled patrons attending performances, exhibitions and events throughout the year.

Action 2: Continue to monitor use of accessible tools currently offered in the venue and for specific events (i.e. hearing loop, relaxed performances etc)

Action 3: Source funding for regular Auslan interpreted performances and events.

Action 4: Investigate audio-description services and how frequently this service could be offered.

Action 5: Audit current website for use of accessible tools and promotion of important information specific to patrons with disability (i.e. Companion Card holders and ticketing, getting in touch with the organisation, use of Visual Rating and Access Symbols on online and print materials, respecting accessibility in the design of promotion materials etc).

OBJECTIVE 1: PROGRAM DELIVERY

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL	TIMELINE	OUTCOME	EVALUATION
Action 1: Program work that is created or devised by artists with disability.	Programming Team	Ongoing	Utilise existing networks and scan further afield (including tertiary institutions) to promote artists with disability to apply for Metro Arts' Annual Program.	Aim for at least one key work to be developed by an artist with disability per year.
Action 2: Seek to appoint an appropriately skilled artist with disability to the Metro Arts Artistic Advisory Group ('MAAAG').	Programming Team	Mid-2022	Utilise existing networks to obtain expressions of interest to join the MAAAG to ensure that disability perspective considered at programming advisory level.	1 artist with disability appointed to the panel, noting all MAAAG positions rotate regularly.
Action 3: Develop alternative methods of participation in Metro Arts' Annual Program for artists with disability.	Programming Team with the support of the Business Development Team as required	Ongoing Ongoing	Direct curation as required Development of key partnerships	Aim for at least one key work to be developed by an artist with disability per year; aim for at least one key partnership with an organisation working with people with disability.

OBJECTIVE 2: STAFF COMPETENCY AND EMPLOYMENT

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL	TIMELINE	OUTCOME	EVALUATION
Action 1: Audit current staff and Board for disability awareness.	Business Development Team	End 2021	Utilise existing networks to develop an internal Disability Awareness Survey for staff and Board.	All staff and Board undertake survey, and Metro Arts gains an insight into the current awareness of all personnel.
Action 2: Develop an ongoing training schedule in disability awareness for staff and Board.	Business Development Team	April 2022 July 2022	Building on the Disability Awareness Survey undertaken in 2021, Metro Arts will develop a training regime for all personnel. All staff and Board undertake key components of the training regime.	Staff and Board have improved disability awareness and apply this awareness.
Action 3: Reduce barriers to persons with disability obtaining and maintaining employment with Metro Arts.	Business Development Team	Dec 2021 Dec 2021	Review Accessible Employment Policy to ensure that all aspects of the employment process are inclusive and accessible. Audit of physical barriers to people with disability working at Metro Arts.	Accessibility requirements are catered for throughout all aspects of the employment process from the advertising phase, interview, correspondence, and induction. Audit undertaken and key action items identified and timelined.

OBJECTIVE 3: PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL ACCESS FOR ARTISTS AND PATRONS

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL	TIMELINE	OUTCOME	EVALUATION
Action 1: Develop methodology for collating audience demographics to capture numbers of disabled patrons attending performances, exhibitions and events throughout the year.	Front of House and Ticketing Teams with support from the Business Development Team	Dec 2021	Consult with existing disability networks and wider arts networks to develop a tool for capturing audience demographic information to better serve patrons and increase Metro Arts' ability to target market performances, exhibitions and events.	Methodology and tools created and utilised in Metro Arts' marketing campaigns.
Action 2: Continue to monitor use of accessible tools currently offered in the venue and for specific events (i.e. hearing loop, relaxed performances etc)	Front of House and Venue Teams	Ongoing	Develop a living document to be continually monitored and updated by Ticketing and Front of House staff.	Bi-annual review of numbers utilising services. 20% increase in number of patrons and artists utilising the services annually.
Action 3: Source funding for regular Auslan interpreted performances and events.	Business Development Team with the support of the Programming Team	Ongoing	Additional funding sourced either from Government, Philanthropic or Corporate Sponsorship for Auslan interpretation services.	Auslan interpretation offered at all major events and announcements; minimum of 3 Auslan interpreted performances per annum.
Action 4: Investigate audio-description services and how frequently this service could be offered.	Programming Team with the support of the Business Development Team	Dec 2021	Ascertain whether funding can be sourced for this. Plan for potential 2022 implementation.	Metro Arts staff decide on implementation of this service in consideration of costs and benefit – consider specifically for key events (i.e. Microfestivals).

<p>Action 5: Audit current website for use of accessible tools and promotion of important information specific to patrons and artists with disability.</p>	<p>Marketing Team with the support of the Business Development Team</p>	<p>Dec 2021</p>	<p>Audit key items such as Companion Card holders and ticketing, getting in touch with the organisation, use of Visual Rating and Access Symbols on online and print materials, respecting accessibility in the design of promotion materials etc.</p>	<p>Develop and implement plan and timeline for upgrading accessibility components of website. Please note, this may include a complete redesign of the website. As such financial planning for such a development is key and will require a significant lead time to finance this.</p>
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