

Arts House Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) Year 1 Progress Report December 2023

Culture and Employment

- Updates to recruitment policies drafted by Access Working Group with advice from Deaf and Disabled consultants.
- New recruitment and selection pack in development with procedures and diversity matrix for panel selection, and negotiation procedures with preferred candidate at time of offer.
- Changes to interview process implemented in mid-2023 include: applicants provided questions and names of panelists in advance, proactive gathering of access requests by Hiring Manager, and interviewees offered the option to refer to notes during interview.
- Job summaries are now advertised on Arts House website written in accessible plain language and link to City of Melbourne employment page.
- Database of organisations to contact when new roles are advertised has been established.
- Business case for Access Coordinator in development as a permanent role shared across Arts House, ArtPlay, Signal, with support from Branch Director.
- Access is an ongoing agenda item in all team and programming meetings.
- Deaf and Disabled representation in 2022-2023 advisory groups:
 - Creative Advisory Group 20%
 - Warehouse Peer Advisory 100%
 - CultureLAB Peer Advisory 20%
 - Access Advisory Group 100%
- Branch wide learnings and sharing of good practice in access is established with Signal, ArtPlay, Libraries, Arts House participating in annual discussions.
- Creative Producer joined cross-council Inclusion Avengers Access Working group and CoM Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) EOI Assessment Panel to appoint new DAC members for 2024.
- Masks and hand sanitiser are available at all times for the public at entry points, and venue signage encourages mask wearing. Event notifications to attendees direct patrons to COVID safety policy.

Learning and Training

- Annual training program in development, with Deaf Awareness, Introduction to Auslan and Blind/Low Vision training scheduled to take place in 2024 with Signal, ArtPlay and Arts House staff and casuals.
- Past training resources including Auslan 6-week Course and Cultural Safety in a Disability Context collated and shared with team.
- Staff induction process under review and new team members invited to Access Working Group meetings and all staff DIAP briefing.
- Creative Advisory Group contributed to artist access workshop ideas in quarterly meeting.
- Artist Fayen d'Evie was commissioned to design and deliver a digital, and an in-person workshop alongside collaborators Lloyd Mst', George Thomas and Jon Tjhia on access and creative practice for Arts House artists in Nov 2023. Post-workshop resources and recording distributed to artists Dec 2023. See customer satisfaction document for feedback.
- Venue Supervisor Warden Training carried out June 2023. Standard venue induction includes these items and process for unlocking automatic doors on accessible toilets.

Creative Program

- Expression of Interest for The Warehouse Residency and CultureLAB reviewed and updated with consultant feedback for launch in Nov 2023. Accessible pathways include: EOI support with Arts Access Victoria, applying in range of formats, soft deadlines, separate access budgets, and provision for Auslan interpreters and support workers have been maintained. EOI schedule adjusted to allow for longer application process.
- Evaluation of The Warehouse Residency results in shift in model to increase resources and focus on capacity building and development of work and reduce expectation of public outcome.
- New partnership brokered with Arts Centre Melbourne through Alter State provides an increase financial investment of \$50,000 to support the development of two projects through The Warehouse Residency in 2024 - 2025.
- Access consultants Jonathan Craig, Luke King and Artemis Derlanea Muñoz engaged prior to Season 2, 2023 and Season 1, 2024 to provide advice and feedback on audience access services and community engagement

strategies. Feedback from access consultants shared with artists for further discussion.

- Arts House maintained provision of audience access services for events and performances including: Auslan, Audio Description, Tactile Tours, Captioning, Relaxed Performance and Relaxed Elements.
- Access Guide template developed for trialing in Season 2 with consultant feedback and now integrated into producing practice for all events in collaboration with companies and artists.
- Access strategies, and creating expanded knowledge and tools, remain ongoing priorities with artists in development and presentation stages. Artists encouraged to engage with creative access workshops, resources and materials.
- Across 2023 Arts House supported 8 Disability led projects including: 3 Warehouse commissions, 2 Presentations, 2 CultureLAB and 1 Artist Lab. Two of these projects were also co-presented digitally with Melbourne Fringe as part of Radical Access program.

Communication

- DIAP and co-design process presented at City of Melbourne meetings and forums including:
 - Creative City branch quarterly meeting
 - Councillor Jamal Hakim in portfolio meeting
 - Strategic Communications team
- DIAP promoted on Arts House channels and events including:
 - Arts House website in a range of accessible formats
 - Artists directed to DIAP commitment alongside Equity-Builder in EOI call out
 - Public event in Dec 2023 sharing the DIAP, Equity-Builder and Season 1, 2024 program. This event was recorded and broadcasted by Vision Australia for national reach.
 - Arts House actively seeks opportunities to present and share DIAP processes with industry and stakeholders.
- Feedback from Access Advisory Group on audience and community engagement implemented for Season 1, 2024 campaign.
- Access symbols reviewed and updated by access consultants for Season 1, 2024.
- As part of Makeshift Publics program, RMIT Masters of Communications Students developed an accessible design resource guide which provides guidelines for inclusive design. Guide is put into practice at Arts House and shared across Council.

- Social media post captions include access services and access notes related to the show or project.
- Season campaigns now include in person and digital launches, including local community gathering, street posters, radios advertising, local media, flyers and shareable digital assets.
- "How did you hear about us?" questionnaire reviewed and revealed that word of mouth, e-news and social media are the top three ways people hear about events.
- Access Advisory Group member Jonathan Craig participated in radio interviews with Vision Australia to promote broader Arts House program and AD/TT services.
- 85% of all events have Access Guides published online anywhere between 2 weeks and 2 days prior to opening. Access Guides maintained and updated on website, pre-show emails and a printed copy is available at reception.
- Maintenance of accessibility web page is ongoing and updates have been made to the navigation of the website to increase ease of use.

Venue

- Ongoing advocacy where possible with Community Development, Transport and local community organisers and associations.
- Remote for all automated doors purchased, programmed and made available to artists working at Arts House.
- Property Services have received current venue audit, access recommendations and requirements.
- Quiet space door modified to remain accessible at all times and prevent visitors from being locked in the space. Additional items purchased for Quiet Space, including stimulating items, earmuffs, cushions and fan.
- Building information pack implemented with six-monthly updates scheduled.
- Seating accessibility in foyer under review following feedback from patrons.
- Production and Business Administration reviewed building audits for sensory specific improvements.
- Ventilation for events consistently monitored: social events held outside when possible, windows and doors opened when possible for indoor events. HVAC systems regularly inspected and maintained.

- Installation of fire detection and alarm notification system in The Warehouse, including strobe visual lighting to indicate evacuation.
- Errol St accessible parking space tiling cobble stones replaced with smooth tiles and kerb ramp installed.
- Dimmable lighting installed in studios and Creative office.
- Audio description equipment purchased and standard set-up finalised.