

# PERTH FESTIVAL

## OUR DISABILITY ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN 2020–2024

Founder



Principal Partner



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practice their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar.

They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyanga of this place – our offices are in Goodamboorup – and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

## **ALTERNATIVE FORMATS**

Our DAIP is available in alternative formats, including PDF, word and audio versions (all available on our website). Hard copy formats in both large and standard print are also available upon request. Other formats of this plan are currently being developed and will be made publicly available via our website once finalised.

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
DEFINITIONS .....	3
What is disability? .....	3
Language.....	3
Other terms.....	3
ABOUT US.....	3
OUR DAIP .....	4
OUR ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE .....	5
METHODOLOGY AND CONSULTATION .....	7
MONITORING AND REVIEW .....	7
KEY STATISTICS .....	8
Demographics.....	8
Participation in Cultural Life.....	9
LEGISLATION AND POLICY .....	9
PLAN VISION, COMMITMENT AND GOALS .....	10
CONTACT THE FESTIVAL .....	19
APPENDIX .....	20

## **INTRODUCTION**

Perth Festival celebrates diversity and difference. We believe all people should have equal access to the arts and we champion accessibility for artists and audiences.

The purpose of this plan is to outline Perth Festival's strategy for improving access and inclusion through programming, audience access and operational reforms. This plan builds on success and learnings from previous work over the years and provides a roadmap for the future to shape and extend the Festival's focus. It is ambitious and spans across the tenures of three Artistic Directors to ensure that access and inclusion is part of the Festival's DNA and is embedded across our organisation.

Perth Festival is proud to present work by extraordinary international and Australian artists with disability. Our commitment to presenting and connecting artists with disabilities and attracting audiences for this ground-breaking area of work offers the potential to challenge not only traditional expectations of a festival program, but also community attitudes to people living with disabilities. Our Festival makes a genuine contribution to the development of the Western Australian arts sector and offers the possibility for our state to lead the way in terms of arts and disability practice nationally.

This is our organisation's first Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). Access and inclusion has become a core value of our organisational culture and is present in all of the conversations that we have. By regularly programming work by artists with disability, we have cemented access and diversity at the forefront of our minds. We are committed to expanding this thinking to all other elements of our work.

We acknowledge the importance of continuous learning in this area, and that the Festival will build upon current knowledge and continue to work collaboratively to raise the aspirations outlined in this Plan over the years ahead.

We acknowledge and sincerely thank the many organisations and individuals who have supported our efforts, by sharing their understanding of the challenges faced by people with disability in accessing the arts and guiding us in our mission to improve the Festival's accessibility.

## **OUR VISION**

By continuing to break down barriers, acknowledging and removing unconscious bias and championing the work of artists with disability, our vision is to play an integral part in creating an inclusive arts industry where everyone is welcome and can thrive.

## **OUR COMMITMENT**

We are committed to increasing our disability confidence and competence and are working towards creating an environment where all artists, audience members and other individuals can equally engage with us.

We want:

- To ensure our Festival can be accessed by everyone in the community, and that all patrons, artists, and staff have an equitable festival experience
- To actively eliminate discrimination, so there are no unnecessary extra steps required for those with disability
- To use inclusive language and create a welcoming space for all people
- To be accountable to our DAIP and to set high and measurable benchmarks
- To be accessible across all disciplines (dance, theatre, music, literature, film, visual arts etc)
- To be leaders, advocates and champions in the areas of access and inclusion.

## **OUR GOALS**

To do this, we have set ourselves the following goals:

### **Leadership**

The Festival is committed to being an innovator and advocate for change in the areas of arts and disability as well as access and inclusion.

### **Accessibility**

The Festival will remove barriers to ensure that everyone can participate equally in our events.

### **Arts Practice**

The Festival values diverse artists and will continue to champion the work of artists with disability to the widest audience possible.

These goals have guided the development of our Action Plan as detailed below. By implementing these actions, we will improve access for artists, audiences, staff and other stakeholders, as well as advocate for change across the wider arts sector.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **What is disability?**

The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines persons with disabilities to include those 'who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'<sup>1</sup>

We subscribe to the social model of disability, which distinguishes between an individual's impairment and disability as the environmental or attitudinal barriers created by society. 'Barriers' are disabling factors that limit opportunity and create disadvantage. Disability can be temporary or permanent, visible or invisible.

The Festival acknowledges that not everyone who encounters disabling factors identifies as a person with disability. People who are D/deaf or hard of hearing may instead identify as part of a cultural and linguistic group, their first language being Auslan. Mental health is also included in our definition of disability, however we acknowledge not everyone with a mental health condition identifies as having disability.

## **ABOUT US**

We exist to enrich life through art.

Perth Festival curates and presents an annual arts festival of the highest international quality. We aspire to create new work and stimulate discourse about Western Australia and our place in a complex and political world. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. The Festival is increasingly commissioning and co-commissioning new Australian and International work.

The Festival was born out of the University of Western Australia's annual summer school entertainment nights as a 'festival for the people' on January 3, 1953. Since then, Perth Festival has seeded and cultivated decades of cultural growth as the oldest arts festival in the Southern Hemisphere.

Perth Festival provides a unique moment in our year to experience outstanding work by the leading artists and thinkers from our region and across the globe.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

Celebrating the role that artists play creating extraordinary ways for us to see, understand and re-imagine our world, we curate an international program of events of exceptional quality, across all art forms, in venues, outdoors, online and in unexpected places. We present innovative arts experiences and create surprising events to engage the widest possible audience.

We are committed to:

- presenting and commissioning work by the world's leading visionary artists;
- raising the profile of Western Australian artists by presenting their work in the context of the international arts festival;
- creating opportunities for dynamic exchanges between Australian and international artists;
- celebrating diversity & difference; and
- building a diverse and engaged audience by creating projects with the community that will resonate with the lives of people living in Western Australia.

## **OUR DAIP**

This Plan consolidates our current knowledge and initiatives, whilst also sharing our aspirations for the future. It is aligned with our Strategic Plan 2018–2022, our Code of Behavior and other core organisational policies. We have a holistic view of access and inclusion and our DAIP covers all areas of our business, from programming, employment, venue accessibility, audience services, marketing, creative learning, production and our relationship with the wider industry.

We acknowledge that improving access and inclusion is an ongoing journey, not a destination. We are committed to continuous improvement and working closely with the community to identify potential barriers and find solutions. We're open, inquisitive, willing to learn, flexible to change and responsive. We understand the principles of universal design, the social model of disability and the complexities of intersectionality. We acknowledge that whilst some barriers may be outside of our direct control, we aim to be an advocate for positive change across the sector and across society.

We anticipate that other opportunities to increase our accessibility will arise over this period that have not been formally documented in this Plan, and that there will be further work to do in future years beyond the life of this particular document. We value our communities' ideas and feedback on our progress and encourage you to share your thoughts and experiences with us.

Leading into the next phase of our festival's development, our DAIP demonstrates our continued support for artists with disability and the value that we see their work making to the wider community and our industry. Across the life of this Plan, we will continue to increase our understanding of how people with disability, across all our stakeholder groups, engage with the Festival. We will draw upon these insights in our planning and decision making to proactively improve access to our events and will continue to create a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value and celebrate people with disability.

## **OUR ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**

We are proud of the work we have done over the last four years to ensure our Festival is accessible to audiences and artists, as well as the world class artists with disability whom we have placed front and centre on our stages.

By featuring high quality work by significant international and Australian artists with disability across the last four years, we have made disability culture central to our Festival's ethos and built a local, state and national audience for this work. We have facilitated connections between Australian artists with disability and senior international professional artists with disability by supported intensive professional development, which has gone on to result in significant new levels of partnerships, artistic collaborations and communities for and between Australian artists with disability, leaving a lasting legacy. We have invested in new work and made arts and disability central to public, advocacy, promotional and marketing conversations. We don't view arts and disability practice as 'other' but as core to Australian and international cultural practice.

Some of the Festival's access and inclusion highlights over the last four years include:

### **Our partnership with DADAA**

In 2015 under the leadership of Artistic Director Wendy Martin, Perth Festival established an on-going partnership with DADAA (Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts, WA). This partnership creates opportunities for the dynamic exchange of ideas and practice between visiting international artists with disability and the Western Australian and national arts community, as well as expanded opportunities for a wider range of audience members to engage with the Festival.

### **Claire Cunningham - Artist in Residence (2016)**

Glasgow-based artist Claire Cunningham was Perth Festival's Artist in Residence

in 2016. A self-identifying disabled artist, Cunningham's unique work consciously rejects traditional dance techniques in its exploration of her physicality, incorporating the crutches that have been a part of her life since age 14. Her acclaimed shows *Guide Gods* and *Give Me A Reason To Live* are two related perspectives on disability and faith and were shown for the first time in Australia.

Claire also hosted a one week workshop with artists from across Australia whose practice is influenced or inspired by disability. What emerged was an extraordinary exchange of ideas and energy using methods and concepts already embedded in Claire's practice as a springboard to explore dance, disability, and individuality. Importantly the workshop set out to enable all of the participants to discover their own form of expression.

### **Jenny Sealey's provocations (2017)**

Artistic Director of the UK's Grease Theatre joined us to facilitate a week long workshop for Australian artists with disability, presented a powerful Keynote speech at *Meeting Place* and increase the knowledge and skills of local arts workers through industry sessions.

These workshops have acted as a connector to bring Australian artists with disability together; they provided a role model through a leading international artist with disability, and also brokered relationships between other Australian artists that have continued beyond the Festival

### **Back to Back Theatre (2017)**

Perth Festival co-commissioned Australia's Back to Back Theatre to create their new work *Lady Eats Apple*.

### **Meeting Place (2017)**

Perth Festival hosted Arts Access Australia's annual *Meeting Place* summit for artists with disability, which was attended by a diverse mix of people interested in arts and disability from around the country.

### **You Know We Belong Together (2018)**

Perth Festival commissioned and co-produced a groundbreaking new work by WA theatre maker with disability Julia Hales. Julia worked with Black Swan State Theatre Company & DADAA to develop a full-length new work. The work featured embedded (aesthetic) access as well as several performers with Downs Syndrome. This work has since been programmed as part of Black Swan's 2019 mainstage series.

## **The Nature of Why (2019)**

The British Paraorchestra, along with Australian choreographer with disability Caroline Bowditch presented this work with the Perth Symphony Orchestra. The work included captioning, AD and Auslan. Caroline Bowditch also ran workshops and provocations for industry leaders on disability and access and action.

## **METHODOLOGY AND CONSULTATION**

We began our development of this Plan in 2018 by engaging an external consultant with disability to help us devise a disability-led approach to designing this document. We established an internal DAIP Project Team, with staff representatives from across the organisation, to champion and guide this project.

Our methodology involved a research phase, a consultation phase followed by detailed analysis. We reviewed internal and public documents and engaged with people with and without disability across all of our stakeholder groups. A series of interviews were conducted with artists, arts workers and partner organisations from WA, across Australia and internationally. Additionally we hosted a number of internal and external surveys, seeking the views of staff, volunteers, Board members, WA artists, organisations and community members.

Data from all of these sources enabled us to gather information about what has worked well and what could be improved, as well as new ideas about what the Festival could do to continue to champion this work over the next four years. This has provided us with the foundations to create an achievable, realistic and impactful DAIP.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

We are committed to a cycle of continuous improvement for all our plans, including this DAIP. This is a live document that will be monitored and reviewed frequently.

The internal DAIP Project Team and the external Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will review and monitor this Plan at least twice a year in line with the planning and delivery cycle of the Festival. Progress Reports and any suggested plan edits will be prepared and discussed by the Executive and Board on an annual basis. The implementation of the DAIP will be reported publicly through the Festival's Annual Report.

Feedback from our Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, staff, artists and audiences with disability, as well as arts and disability organisations will be gathered

over the life of the DAIP, to contribute to the plan's evaluation.

The DAIP will be thoroughly reviewed and re-written at least every four years, following appropriate consultation processes with the disability community and other relevant stakeholders.

Our Plan is available to the public via the Festival website and accessible formats are available on request. This plan is also registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

## DEMOGRAPHICS

- Almost one in five Australians are people with disability (18.3% or 4.3 million people)<sup>2</sup>
- 15.8% of Western Australians identify as people with disability<sup>3</sup>
- More than 1 million people with disability are from non-English speaking backgrounds<sup>4</sup>
- Just under half (45.1%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 years and over, experience disability<sup>5</sup>
- People with disability are twice as likely to be in the bottom 20% of gross household incomes<sup>6</sup>
- 45% of those with disability in Australia are living either near or below the poverty line, more than double the OECD average of 22%<sup>7</sup>
- 45% of the population will experience a mental health issue at some point<sup>8</sup>
- 3.4 million (15%) of Australians have a physical impairment<sup>9</sup>
- Vision Australia estimates there are 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or partially sighted
- 1 in 6 Australians are affected by hearing loss. There are approximately 30,000 Deaf Auslan users with total hearing loss.<sup>10</sup>

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2 Australian Bureau of Statistics 4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015

3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015

4 National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) People from NESB with disability in Australia: What does the data say? March 2010

5 ABS 4714.0 - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2014-15

6 ABS 4430.0

7 Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2011. 'Disability expectations - Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia'.

8 ABS 4326.0 - National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results, 2007

9 Australian Network on Disability <http://www.and.org.au/pages/disability-statistics.html>

10 'Why Auslan Interpreting Matters' [www.VicDeaf.com.au](http://www.VicDeaf.com.au)

## **PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL LIFE**

- In 2012, nearly four in five people with disability aged 15 to 64 years participated in a cultural activity at least once a year (79%). People with disability aged 65 years and over had the lowest attendance rates across all activities<sup>11</sup>
- Australians are not creatively participating in the arts because of the opportunity cost, the time and money that it takes. Overall, access barriers were raised more often in 2013 (73%) than in 2009 (64%)<sup>12</sup>
- 9% of artists identify with disability – roughly half of the overall proportion of the Australian population reporting disability. Artists with disability currently earn 42% less overall than artists without disability, compared to only 8% less in the last survey.<sup>13</sup>

## **LEGISLATION AND POLICY**

This Plan aligns with international, national and WA social policy and legislative frameworks including:

- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 (UNCRPD)
- UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005
- World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG)
- National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 (NDS)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)
- Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Services Act (WA) 1993 (amended 2004)
- Disability Services Amendment Act (WA) 1999 and 2004
- Equal Opportunities Act (WA) 1984
- Disability Discrimination and other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2009
- National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy 2009
- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- National Arts and Disability Strategy 2009
- WA State Government Access Guidelines for Information, services and Facilities 2003 (amended 2012)

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11 ABS 4172.0 – Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 2014

12 Australia Council for the Arts, Arts in Daily Life: Australian Participation in the Arts. Report May 2014

13 Australia Council for the Arts, Making Art Work, 2017

This Plan aligns with the 7 DAIP outcome areas listed by the WA State Government Department of Communities, Disability Services.

We also acknowledge that several new pieces of policy are currently under development, which may have an impact on our work in this area in the future, including:

- WA Government State Disability Plan
- WA Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries new 10 year plan
- Australia Council for the Arts Strategic Plan (for release in 2020)
- National Arts and Disability Strategy (currently being reviewed)

## ACTION PLAN

**Leadership** – The Festival is committed to being an innovator and advocate for change in the areas of arts and disability as well as access and inclusion.

**Accessibility** – The Festival will remove barriers to ensure that everyone can participate equally in our events.

**Arts Practice** – The Festival values diverse artists and will continue to champion the work of artists with disability to the widest audience possible.

Outcome area and action	Performance measures
<b>LEADERSHIP</b> – The Festival is committed to being an innovator and advocate for change in the areas of arts and disability as well as access and inclusion.	
<b>DAIP</b>  Successfully launch, implement, monitor and report on the DAIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DAIP launched in 2020</li> <li>• DAIP published on Festival website and Australian Human Rights Commission website and shared with internal and external stakeholders</li> <li>• DAIP integrated into all Festival induction processes</li> <li>• DAIP is integrated into organisation’s business plan</li> <li>• Alternative formats of DAIP developed and published</li> <li>• Reviews held at twice annually by DAIP Project team (internal) and Access &amp; Inclusion Advisory Committee(external)</li> <li>• DAIP annual progress report published in Festival Impact Report</li> </ul>

<p><b>Audience Development</b></p> <p>Utilise strategies to increase number of people with disability attending the festival as audience members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Audience Development Strategy for audiences with access needs</li> <li>• Engage with community groups, organisations such as DADAA, other Festivals, programs such as Gig Buddies and individuals (including Access &amp; Inclusion Advisory Committee) to widen reach and improve Festival knowledge, training and services</li> <li>• Find accessible ways to tell the Festival’s story and share successful case studies, so that people with disability trust that the Festival will provide a genuinely accessible experience</li> <li>• Create a database of access service users for targeted marketing campaigns</li> <li>• Work with Perth venues with the aim of embedding access services across the calendar year</li> <li>• Produce Accessibility Guidelines for speakers at all Festival events, which include good practice in presentation accessibility and working with access workers</li> <li>• Review the accessibility of Perth Festival’s external communications</li> </ul>
<p><b>Continuous learning</b></p> <p>Utilise consultation, feedback and complaints mechanisms to make improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve Access &amp; Inclusion Advisory Committee in decision making processes. Providing advice across all areas of Festival work including new technology, built environment and marketing and communication</li> <li>• Utilise committee to advise overall areas of Festival work. Such as built environments, ticketing, venues</li> <li>• Monitor progress and share outcomes across the organisation</li> <li>• Facilitate appropriate training for the DAIP Project Team across the life of this plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <p>Partner and engage with stakeholders who can advance the Festival’s aspirations relating to access and inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain partnership with DADAA to continue to build Festival’s relationship with artists with disability and knowledge of access and inclusion</li> <li>• Establish new partnerships with arts and/or disability organisations, to increase audience reach and continue to develop relationships with artists within the sector</li> <li>• Secure financial partnerships which will enable expansion of the access program, including philanthropic and sponsorship opportunities</li> <li>• Collaborate with other Australian and International organisations to learn from each other’s access experiences and share knowledge</li> <li>• Collaborate with Perth venues to share equipment, training and knowledge</li> </ul>

<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>Ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped to confidently engage with people with disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all staff and volunteers receive information about the DAIP, Festival access policies and other access resources via induction process and periodically thereafter</li> <li>• Deliver Disability Inclusion Training to all staff (including seasonal staff, volunteers and external venue staff) on an annual basis to ensure high level of current knowledge</li> <li>• Ensure managers are trained in techniques relating to management of staff with access requirements and who may need workplace adjustments, as required</li> <li>• Collaborate with other Perth arts organisations and venues to share training, equipment and experiences</li> <li>• Work with DADAA to produce a video resource about access, inclusion to share with seasonal staff, volunteers and venue staff on commencement</li> <li>• Develop and distribute an ‘access cheat sheet’, to ensure every team member is aware of the Festival’s accessibility options available to patrons, what inclusive language is best to use and the access specifics of each venue</li> <li>• Offer a briefing session for all staff and volunteers with the Audiences Services Manager to talk through any questions</li> <li>• Encourage key staff to attend additional, more advanced access training/industry opportunities as they arise, to continue building knowledge within the team</li> <li>• Deliver series of annual staff engagement activities focused on arts and disability practice, learning and dialogue, including celebration of International Day of People with Disability</li> </ul>
<p><b>People</b></p> <p>Create an inclusive workplace which engages a diverse range of staff, volunteers and other workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure position descriptions are designed with inclusivity and access in mind, with reference to the Festival’s commitment to access</li> <li>• Ensure that recruitment processes are accessible and potential applicants are reassured that access requirements for application/interview/on the job will be met</li> <li>• Ensure that all staff are asked about their access requirements on commencement and that reasonable adjustments are made. Job access support and flexible working arrangements are implemented where required</li> <li>• Include access related KPIs in performance appraisal process</li> <li>• Develop a Diversity Employment Strategy to increase the number of people with disability working at the Festival, across a range of areas and at different levels, including the Board</li> <li>• Demonstrate commitment to positive mental health outcomes for all employees, via Health and Wellbeing Policy and access to an Employee Assistance Program</li> <li>• Consider the feasibility of running an internship, traineeship and/or work experience program specifically for people with disability, which would enable people with disability to develop employment skills within the arts sector</li> <li>• Ensure tender/contractor, volunteer, internships and Connect programs are accessible. Actively engage people with disability to apply for these programs or positions</li> </ul>

<p><b>Resourcing</b></p> <p>Consider appropriate resourcing and budget to successfully deliver access and inclusion goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access continues to be appropriately resourced. Expand resourcing if/when required</li> <li>• Ensure the access budget is considered and developed on a regular basis and that sufficient funding is available for the access program to be successful and grow</li> <li>• Consider development, philanthropic and fundraising avenues to support the access and inclusion program. Aim to secure corporate partners to support the access program, over multiple years where possible</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advocacy and influence</b></p> <p>Expand the festival's reputation as a leader nationally and internationally by demonstrating best practice in access and inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share knowledge, learnings, tools, resources and success stories via conversations, publishing articles/case studies and presenting at conferences</li> <li>• Actively engage in arts industry discussions and groups relating to diversity (e.g. Screen Diversity Inclusion Network, Arts Access Australia's Meeting Place)</li> <li>• Regularly engage in a dialogue with other festivals about access work and work by artists with disability and share work where appropriate. Utilise existing platforms such as Major Festivals Initiative to champion the importance of this work</li> <li>• Invite other festivals and key presenters to see work by artists with disability which the Festival programs and to experience access services offered</li> <li>• Continue to host industry workshops on access and inclusion with leading artists with disability, to increase sector knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Establish a WA Arts and Cultural Access Consortium, to share best practice ideas around access</li> <li>• Scope the potential of working with State Government to produce a best practice guideline around access and disability, which could be shared with the rest of the WA arts sector with foresight to influencing legislative change</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disability sector</b></p> <p>Work collaboratively with the disability sector during this key time of change in WA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow and maintain strong relationships with the disability sector, including government departments and Ministers</li> <li>• Be mindful of opportunities and risks associated with policy changes, which may be relevant to the Festival</li> <li>• Contribute to advocacy for artists with disability within the community through a creation and promotion of our programs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Board</b></p> <p>Ensure diversity and difference is regularly considered at a Board level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in regular dialogue with the Board to ensure they understand Festival access issues and gaps and the impacts of these on people with disability</li> <li>• Prioritise diversity when recruiting for new Board members. Consider appointing people with disability to the Board to increase representation and inclusion of people with disability in Festival decision making roles</li> </ul>

<p><b>Data, research and evaluation</b></p> <p>Conduct data collection, research and evaluation in an accessible and inclusive manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore conducting an annual access and inclusion survey (as detailed above), for audiences, artists and staff. Incorporate learnings into future festivals</li> <li>• Hold an annual access debrief/consultation session post-Festival which considers survey results and any feedback/complaints received</li> <li>• Ensure access is appropriately considered and incorporated into existing research and evaluation channels (e.g. Culture Counts) so that people with disability can participate. Ensure diversity data is captured across these projects</li> <li>• Consider developing and tracking diversity (and disability) benchmarks and targets for various festival components, e.g. audience numbers, artists, workshop participants, etc</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate diversity data is captured about staff and volunteers on a regular basis</li> </ul>
<p><b>ACCESSIBILITY</b> – The Festival will remove barriers to ensure that everyone can participate equally in our events.</p>	
<p><b>Physical environments</b></p> <p>Work to make physical environments on which Festival events take place as accessible as possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for whole of journey experience for patrons and artists, including transport options, drop off points and ensuring routes and surrounding environments are accessible and raise issues with local council as required</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate, comfortable seating options are available at Festival venues. Consider use of priority access seating for venues with large queues/lines</li> <li>• Ground staff/volunteers to be briefed on any potential access issues, safety issues or hazards</li> <li>• Work on improving crowd management and disability access issues at large events, where environments are less controlled. Provide clear information about access for these events. Ensure all venues and built features (eg ramps) used or created by the Festival are accessible and meet safety codes, by creating and using an access checklist which outlines minimum requirements for built venues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Venues</b></p> <p>Continue to improve the accessibility of venues used by the Festival</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with venues and encourage them to improve their accessibility and communication</li> <li>• Continue to build strong relationships with Perth Theatre Trust and state government and utilise connections to advocate for necessary change relating to venue access</li> <li>• Investigate working with government to conduct access audits of frequently used venues and consult with venues on required changes</li> <li>• Produce a venue access checklist to conduct regular venue access audits (prior to and during the Festival), to avoid last minute/unforeseen access issues</li> <li>• Work with external Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee / other disability community members to conduct access site visits where required</li> </ul>

<p><b>Communications (Internal and external)</b></p> <p>Ensure comms are inclusive and accessible to people with a range of different access needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish disability language guidelines (as part of the Festival Style Guide) that align with social model of disability and universal design.</li> <li>• Ensure all communication is designed with access in mind and is available in a range of accessible formats on request and publicise the availability of this information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Publicity and Marketing</b></p> <p>Utilise strategic marketing and publicity opportunities to increase awareness of the Festival's commitment to access and inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all information that people may require to make an informed decision about access is provided across multiple mediums, including digital platforms</li> <li>• Include visual and written examples of people with disability (artists, audiences, volunteers, staff) in general Festival marketing and media materials</li> <li>• Ensure brochure, website and other marketing materials don't compromise on accessibility for the benefit of design. Build access into design briefs/considerations where possible</li> <li>• Promote all aspects of the arts and disability program</li> <li>• Ensure all feedback and complaints processes are accessible, are available in a range of different formats and are clearly identifiable</li> <li>• Consider alternative publicity options, such as promoting accessible events via Blind Radio, Deaf Schools, Hearing Aid providers, GPs and other access related avenues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Website</b></p> <p>Ensure the website reflects the Festival's commitment to accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a website access audit and implement improvements to ensure website complies with WCAG standards, achieving a minimum AA rating</li> <li>• Ensure all appropriate Festival documents are digitally available, in word/html/rtf as well as PDF format</li> <li>• Ensure Festival website video content is accessible</li> <li>• Work towards a more integrated placement of the access symbols and information on the website, which is easily visible and navigable for people with disability. Use larger text with higher prominence</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ticketing</b></p> <p>Ensure booking and ticketing processes are inclusive for everyone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to improve access ticketing, with a focus on allowing wheelchair seating and companion card sales online</li> <li>• Continue to assess the affordability of ticket prices for people from low socio-economic backgrounds (including people with disability). Ensure accessible ticket prices are available for those who need it</li> <li>• Share the learnings and improvements that the Festival has made around ticketing via national and international platforms such as the Tessitura conference</li> </ul>

<p><b>Working environment</b></p> <p>Investigate solutions to make our working environment more accessible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the accessibility of the current office building, making recommendations of improvements required and any innovative solutions</li> <li>• Raise building access issues with venue owner, with the aim of jointly working together towards a suitable resolution</li> <li>• Consider partnering with other organisations to share accessible spaces as required</li> <li>• Scope the feasibility of using the Arts Passport program as a mechanism to share accessible office space</li> </ul>
<p><b>Internal processes</b></p> <p>Ensure internal Festival processes are inclusive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access is discussed at all key festival team meetings, to heighten staff awareness and engagement with the access program</li> <li>• Promote arts and disability resources, advisory services and publications internally through staff meetings</li> <li>• Consider the benefits of producing an annual access checklist for use across the team, which lists the Festival’s minimum acceptable level of access provision, as well as what the Festival aims to produce in terms of best practice</li> </ul>
<p><b>Access services</b></p> <p>Offer a wide range of high-quality access services for a wide variety of work across the Festival program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access &amp; Inclusion Advisory Committee to have input into which works which will have access services attached and preferred providers</li> <li>• Ensure clear and timely communication about access services provided, so people can plan in advance</li> <li>• Investigate use of new technology possibilities which can enhance accessibility</li> <li>• Continue providing a high level of customer service to access patrons by maintaining dedicated email and other contact methods as well as dedicated ticketing person and Audience Services Manager</li> <li>• Continue partnering with organisations to assist in the production of accessible formats</li> <li>• Ensure access is provided across all Festival programs on an equitable basis to match demand</li> <li>• Consider the potential of live streaming, for patrons who may not physically be able to attend</li> <li>• Continue the production of Festival Access Guides, including in alternative formats</li> <li>• Maintain a section in artist contracts and via artist portal around access services. Work with artists to ensure they have an understanding on what this means and provide further education/support as required, to remove any potential barriers to works being made accessible</li> <li>• Regularly review the type and amount of access services offered, promote availability and assess what other services may be appropriate. Maintain a commitment to offering Auslan, captioning, Audio Description, and Tactile Tours. Consider introducing relaxed performances for audiences with sensory needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>ARTS PRACTICE</b> – The Festival values diverse artists and will continue to champion the work of artists with disability to the widest audience possible.</p>	

<p><b>Programming</b></p> <p>Continue to highlight the work of artists with disability within the Festival program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the Artistic Director and programmers see a wide range of work of artists with disability nationally and internationally and budget accordingly for required travel to enable this</li> <li>• Bring additional expertise into the programming team as required, to ensure exposure to potential artists who may be suitable for the Festival program</li> <li>• Engage in a regular dialogue with arts and disability organisations, artists with disability and other festivals/ events, to kept abreast of new artists and understand the diversity of the genre etc. Follow international and national trends in arts and disability practice</li> <li>• Be conscious of authentic casting, by choosing to program work where characters with disability are played by actors with disability</li> <li>• Continue to commit to developing the work of/collaborating/ programming local, national and international artists with disability</li> <li>• Seek out innovative exchanges/dialogues/relationships with artists with disability locally, nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Reference the Festival's commitment to arts and disability in the next AD job package</li> <li>• Consider what other programs might be relevant to advance the cause of artists with disability</li> <li>• Explore the viability of the Festival becoming an Unlimited commissions program ally, and/or running a satellite Unlimited program/arts and disability festival within Australia</li> </ul>
<p><b>Commissioning</b></p> <p>Continue a commitment to commissioning work by artists with disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to invest in new work by artists with disability by exploring possible commissioning opportunities locally, nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Scope the potential of starting an artist with disability commissioning fund and supporting at least one commission for an artist with disability across the life of this Plan. Earmark an appropriate amount in the festival budget (including access costs) and play an Executive Producer role where required</li> <li>• Ensure that when Festival supported commissions transition from rehearsal room into a theatre, that access support continues, and artists continue to have access requirements met</li> <li>• Advocate for artists with disability and access via other existing commissioning channels which Perth Festival is a part of including the Major Festivals Initiative</li> </ul>
<p><b>Artform diversity</b></p> <p>Consider access and inclusion across all art forms that the Festival engages in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access, inclusion and artists with disability are part of the brief for all members of the curatorial team</li> <li>• Explore partnering with organisations who can assist with the expansion of art form areas which have not included as many artists with disability over previous festivals</li> <li>• Work with Festival venue partners to encourage them to expand the access services provided at events, performances or exhibitions. Have a regular dialogue with the venues about the importance of access and work towards setting a benchmark/set of access standards</li> </ul>

<p><b>Artists</b></p> <p>Continue to support artists with disability and educate other artists about making their work accessible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support access needs of artists attending the Festival and offer a high level of service, to ensure they have equitable and positive experiences</li> <li>• Ensure programming team feel confident to ask artists about access requirements via the Artist Portal and through conversation, to ensure no assumptions are made and all requirements are met to a high standard</li> <li>• Support artists with disability to help build their career trajectories (e.g. through workshops, programming, networking and industry events)</li> <li>• Where possible, support international artists with disability to connect with other performance or teaching opportunities whilst in Australia to maximize their visit and to ensure a wide audience can see their work</li> <li>• Maintain wording in artist contracts around access services for their work</li> <li>• Edit Artist Guide to re-iterate Festival’s commitment to our artists with disability, diversity and difference</li> </ul>
<p><b>Education and Creative Learning programs</b></p> <p>Continue to provide workshops, festival labs and other educational opportunities for people with disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to offer artistic training opportunities for artists with disability to develop their practice and create connections with other artists with disability. Partner with other organisations to deliver this where appropriate</li> <li>• Ensure workshop participants such as the Festival Lab have an opportunity to see work by artists with disability where possible</li> <li>• Utilise the education program and industry talks program to facilitate conversations about accessible performance, inclusive practice, aesthetic access and access services</li> <li>• Broaden remit of education program to include more students with disability, by considering partnerships/strategic relationships with appropriate schools and other disability organisations</li> <li>• Consider creating dedicated places within existing programs for students with disability and/or creating new specific/tailored programs</li> <li>• Create further opportunities for all students (with and without disability) to engage with the Festival’s artists with disability</li> <li>• Announce all workshop opportunities open to national artists with enough lead-time so that artists with disability can apply for funding to attend</li> <li>• Maintain relationships with the alumni of the arts and disability workshops the Festival has run over previous years</li> </ul>

## **CONTACT THE FESTIVAL**

Perth Festival values community feedback on our progress in meeting the goals and actions outlined in our DAIP. We encourage individuals and organisations to share their thoughts and experiences to ensure our continued improvement.

Please contact us on:

**Phone** 08 6488 2000

**Email** [access@perthfestival.com.au](mailto:access@perthfestival.com.au)

**National Relay Service**

TTY users phone 133 677

Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727

Via <https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au/>

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

This DAIP was created with the guidance of Morwenna Collett, Arts, Access and Inclusion Consultant.

Perth Festival would like to acknowledge those people who contributed their time and expertise to participate in the development of this plan, including:

- Interview participants and survey respondents
- Perth Festival staff, volunteers and board members
- Perth Festival artists, audience members, partners, arts organisations, venues and other stakeholders.

The Festival also gratefully recognises the support of others who have contributed toward the growth and development of accessibility at the Festival over previous years and would like to especially thank Wendy Martin for her commitment to programming extraordinary artists with disability from around the world.

# APPENDIX

## Language

The Festival recognises that there are varying views on language and terminology around disability in Australia and internationally. Language can be both a personal and political choice. We use the person-first language of ‘person with disability’ to recognise that disability is just one aspect of a person’s life and does not determine who they are. However, we respect that different people have different preferences about language.

## Other terms

**Inclusion** is about creating an environment that celebrates diversity and is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. This environment recognises, utilises and values the knowledge, abilities, skills and ideas of people, irrespective of race, ethnicity or religion, gender or sexual orientation, education level, socio-economic background, age, disability or family responsibility.<sup>14</sup>

**Access** is about creating the necessary conditions for all individuals and organisations to utilise services, facilities, programs and employment opportunities. Access is about making space for the unique characteristics that each person brings. Barriers to equitable access fall into the categories of physical, communication, economic, social and attitudinal.

**Universal Access** is about the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of their age, size or ability. An environment (or any building, product or service in that environment) should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to use it. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits.<sup>15</sup>

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14 University of Western Australian Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

15 <http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/>

