

Our Disability and Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2025



**FOOTSCRAY
COMMUNITY
ARTS**



We acknowledge that we work, live and create on the unceded sovereign lands of the Eastern Kulin Nation.

We offer our respects to the Elders of these traditional lands and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land.

We acknowledge Elders within the d/Deaf and Disabled community who have advocated, created and provided leadership.

Our work is not possible without the work of Elders and leaders in the community.



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Our Disability and Inclusion Action Plan is a document that has been created in collaboration with our community.

It is a plan to make sure Footscray Community Arts integrates accessible ways of working, developing and presenting art.

Goals

Our vision is that all communities are valued as makers of culture.

Through this plan, our goals are to:

- Support leadership by d/Deaf and Disabled artists and workers.
- Develop a team culture that prioritises access at every level of the organisation.
- Champion human rights by being thoughtful, considered and focused on improving access.
- Ensure access is inclusive across the communities we centre and prioritise: First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQIA+ and d/Deaf and Disabled artists.
- Continually review, listen, engage and collaborate with d/Deaf and Disabled artists, workers and audience members.
- Be consistent and considerate in how we work.

About Footscray Community Arts

Footscray Community Arts is an organisation that supports artists to develop and present art.

Established in 1974, we have always centred artists who have been traditionally left out or under-represented in the arts.

Since 1991 we have run ArtLife, a program for Disabled artists. For over 30 years, we have been collaborating with d/Deaf and Disabled communities.

This plan is about the future. It will help us organise ourselves to make sure all aspects of our operations and program are accessible.



Methodology

To make this plan, we engaged over 133 people from our d/Deaf and Disabled community, as well as staff, Board members and other stakeholders.

We did this by:

- Having access audits of how we work by disability-led organisation LOOM Arts Management and Arts Access Victoria.
- Welcoming feedback from community in an Open Day and anonymous survey.
- Having many conversations with d/Deaf and Disabled individuals and getting advice.
- Working with different parts of our team to understand what we can change.

About our Working Group

We created a working group with team members from different departments to learn together, collaborate and action accessibility improvements.

Our working group helps us take responsibility to continuously improve as a team.



Terminology

As an organisation, we now use the terms d/Deaf and Disabled and people with lived experience of disability.

We are committed to using language that reflects the needs of our communities.

We recognise that people use different terms to describe themselves and that language is important and complex.

In our relationships with individuals, we will always be led by the person and how they want to identify themselves.

We commit to reviewing the language we use and respond to the politics of our communities.

The Social Model of Disability

The Social Model of Disability shapes our values and frames our understanding and responsibility to access.

The Social Model is a framework for understanding disability.

Its key principle is that a person is disabled by their environment and society.

We will take responsibility and take action to address barriers and meet the access needs of d/Deaf and Disabled staff, artists and art workers, leaders, our audience and community members.

How we will achieve our goals

To ensure we deliver on this plan, we will take the following steps:

- As a team, we will come together to review our progress against our action plan three times a year.
- We will review our plan annually with our Board and staff.
- We will publish our progress on our website each year.
- We will invite, collect and analyse feedback from the community year-round, including an annual open day and survey to find out how we are doing.
- We will continue consulting with d/Deaf and Disabled artists and community members.



What You Told Us

Quotes from d/Deaf and Disabled consultation and community feedback.

“

Footscray Community Arts became a culturally safe space for me.

d/Deaf and/or Disabled consultant and artist

“

The opportunity to give feedback is just great.

Community Feedback Day participant

“

I have an intersecting identity in that I'm queer as well, so I also felt safe as a queer person with Footscray Community Arts team who were warm and welcoming towards me.

d/Deaf and/or Disabled consultant and artist

“

If people ask you to do something, try to remember and try not to put the onus on the disabled person.

d/Deaf and/or Disabled consultant and artist

“

We liked the Feedback day/open forum you held. The idea was good with lots of staff on hand to talk to obviously you were looking for feedback which is always good to see. My feedback about the day is very positive and I would hope you may consider running one or two again next year, it is always good to talk directly to staff give and receive some feedback.

Community Feedback Day participant

“

It's important to allow the Deaf artist to focus on their artistic selves, and not do the extra labour to advocate.

d/Deaf and/or Disabled consultant and artist

“

The DIAP needs to be a living and breathing thing, so that Footscray Community Arts can look at it regularly and change standards/ implement changes to make their Community Centre accessible for every single person.

d/Deaf and/or Disabled consultant and artist

“

Accessibility is very present at Footscray Community Arts but in a bounded kind of way. If you're going to make a space completely accessible, you have to be vigilant about that and talk to people with lived experience.

d/Deaf and/or Disabled consultant and artist

***What do you think
Footscray Community
Arts does well in terms
of accessibility?***

“

*Having representation of
artists with disabilities*

Survey response

“

*It feels safe to me
because artists from
my communities are in
the program often.*

Survey response

“

*Opportunity to make
friends and art. Feel
good about coming
here*

**Community Feedback Day
participant**

“

People smile and say hello and know my name

Community Feedback Day participant

“

Community connection

Community Feedback Day participant

“

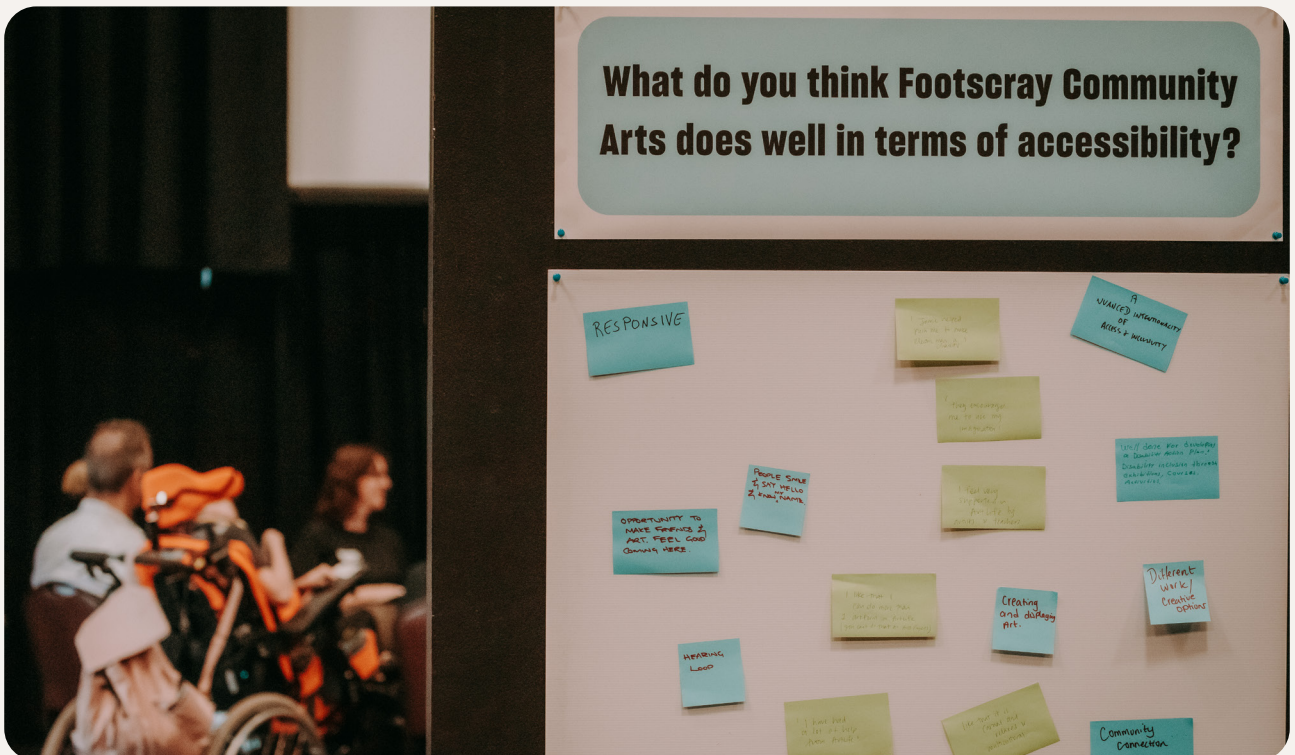
There are lots of different kinds of events, and, they have free ones, so I feel I can always find something to attend throughout the year.

Survey response

“

Staff are welcoming

Survey response



***What Footscray
Community Arts
could improve
in terms of
accessibility.***

“

*More links with
multicultural
communities.
Awareness of this place
is low in multicultural
communities.*

**Community Feedback
Day participant**

“

*Make it more
accessible to go for
excursions – need
accessible van.*

**Community Feedback
Day participant**

“

Disability leadership

Survey response

“

More information – information is number one barrier to me engaging with any public event or program.

Survey response

“

Keep in contact with Disabled artists and listen to our feedback.

Survey response

“

Prioritise disabled/D/deaf arts workers.

Survey response





Our Focus Areas

The following themes came out of the feedback we received from our communities. These have been turned into focus areas.

LEADERSHIP

COMMUNICATION

CREATIVITY

EXPERIENCE

Key Actions

Our focus areas have key actions and outcomes to guide us in achieving our goals. We will evaluate these actions in consultation with d/Deaf and Disabled communities.

LEADERSHIP

We are committed to ensuring there is d/Deaf and Disabled leadership across our organisation.

We will do this by:

- Provide training to all staff about disability and access.
- Ensuring all parts of Footscray Community Arts is accessible, culturally safe and well-equipped to support the leadership of d/Deaf and Disabled artists and arts workers.
- Review and update all policies and procedures to embed accessibility.
- Improve HR processes to integrate accessibility within our culture and way of working.

**Key Actions:
LEADERSHIP**

Invest in leadership and representation of d/Deaf and Disabled staff at all levels of organisation.

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Establish goal of 20% of paid artists to identify as d/Deaf and Disabled.	Incorporate goal in our Strategic Plan. Report on percentage in Annual Reports.
Scope and undertake business case for dedicated Access Officer role.	Research similar roles within the arts sector. Receive feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants about Access Officer role. Undertake business case by 2024 for Board discussion.
Establish goal of 20% of core and casual staff to identify as d/Deaf and Disabled.	Incorporate goal in our Strategic Plan, report on goal to the Board.
Establish goal for representation of d/Deaf and Disabled staff in management and leadership positions.	Establish goal by 2023 with continued feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants. Incorporate goal in our Strategic Plan, report on goal to the Board.
Establish goal for representation of d/Deaf and Disabled people in Board positions.	Establish goal by 2023 with continued feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants. Incorporate goal in our Strategic Plan.

Key Actions:
LEADERSHIP

Ensure access is embedded in all policies and procedures are reviewed with DIAP lens applied as per the review cycle

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Support employment of people with access requirements by embedding reasonable adjustment to policies and procedures to support Employment Assistant Funding.	Establish workflow for Employment Assistant Funding applications by 2023. Include Employment Assistant Funding process in recruitment strategy and Employee Lifecycle policy by 2023 onwards. Review workflow annually.
Develop formal procedures for communicating and providing access requirements in staff and board meetings.	Seek feedback on the procedure from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants. Implement the procedure in all organisational meetings starting from 2023.
Develop procurement policy that provides guidelines on fees for consultants.	Develop policy and implement from 2024 onwards.
Establish minimum requirements for external venue hire events in terms of accessibility and include in venue hire policy to advocate for accessible events.	Seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants about venue hire policy. Include accessibility requirements in hire packages and policy by 2023. Implemented across all external hires from 2024 onwards.

**Key Actions:
LEADERSHIP**

Review and improve all existing HR processes and norms to embed access

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Establish safe, robust and regular mechanisms for managers to have conversations and check in about access needs with their teams.	Receive feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants about training. Staff training about cultural safety and access needs included in training schedule from 2023.
Revise recruitment and on-boarding policy and induction checklist to better support staff with access requirements, including access to the Employment Assistant Fund. Include goals and quotas and reporting on number of d/Deaf and Disabled applicants.	Seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants regarding staff recruitment and onboarding with access requirements. Revise policy by 2023 based on received feedback. Include recruitment and onboarding training for managers in the training schedule.
Develop a year-round training schedule that address whole of org, and specific team requirements.	Receive feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants on training topics. Finalise training schedule for 2023 by mid 2023. Establish a yearly training schedule each year.
Have access as a standing agenda item for all staff, team and board meetings. Create more definition and support for staff to have conversations about access and how it relates to their work.	Have feedback sessions with staff and the Board to discuss the concept of access. Include access as a standing agenda item starting from 2023. Continuously receive feedback from staff, teams, and the Board on the progress of discussing access in meetings.
Review and update of Employee Handbook and Induction Checklist, incorporate of ArtLife Team induction information across whole of business that includes artist -led practice, advocacy and supporting self-advocacy and communication needs.	Align handbook and induction checklist with revised recruitment and onboarding policy by 2023, incorporating Deaf and Disabled consultation. Annually review Handbook and Induction checklist.

COMMUNICATION

We will ensure strong communication and collaboration is embedded in how we work.

We will do this by:

- Developing consistently strong forms of communication for audiences and artists we work with.
- Invest in and build our relationships with d/Deaf and Disabled Communities.
- Work with d/Deaf and Disabled consultants to evaluate our communication strategies.

Key Actions:
COMMUNICATION

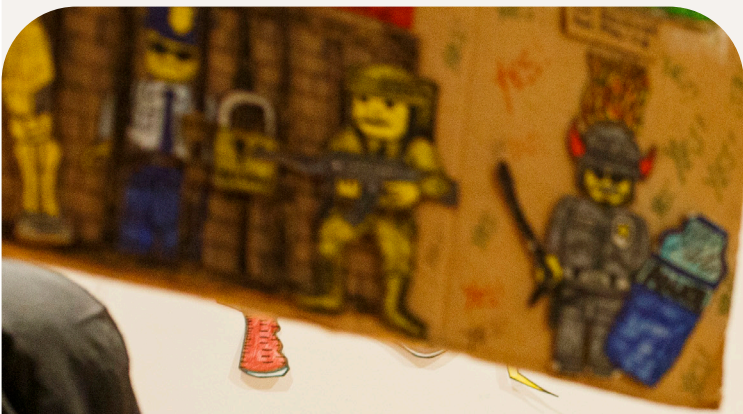
Adjust our internal processes to pivot around artist and audience journey's with Footscray Community Arts.

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Audit existing gaps/issues about audience journey experience to Footscray Community Arts.	Seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants, artists and community members. Complete audit by 2023 with recommended actions.
Audit existing gaps/ issues about online user experience.	Seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants, artists and community members. Complete audit by 2023 with recommended actions.
Develop a venue and front of house access handbook for any audience and visitor enquires.	Receive and review feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants, artists and community members. Implement access handbook by 2023, annually reviewed and updated.
Develop a reception communication plan that ensures consistent support and communication is available.	Receive and review feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants, artists and community members. Implement reception communication plan by 2023, annually reviewed and updated.
Audit existing gaps/issues about audience journey experience to Footscray Community Arts.	Seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants, artists and community members. Complete audit by 2023 with recommended actions.

Key Actions:
COMMUNICATION

Invest in and build relationships with the d/Deaf and Disabled Communities.

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Establish relationships with d/Deaf and Disabled artists to develop a network of advisors and collaborators for paid consultancy.	Strategy sessions with existing d/Deaf and Disabled networks and advisors by 2023. Implement strategy 2024-2025.
Design and action an annual strategy for gathering feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled communities. Establish formal process of receiving and responding to feedback.	Strategy sessions with existing d/Deaf and Disabled networks and advisors by 2023. Implement strategy 2024-2025.



CREATIVITY

We will provide a space for d/Deaf and Disabled artists to be their full artistic selves and create ambitious work. We will ensure our internal processes are accessible and provide tailored and appropriate support for artists.

We will do this by:

- Improving our project management workflows to embed access at every stage of a project with tangible actions.
- Adjust our internal collaboration processes to be artist-led.

Key Actions:
CREATIVITY

Improve our producing workflow to embed access at every step of a project.

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Update the existing producing workflow-embed accessibility at all stages of a project lifecycle. Establish a minimum access framework for projects to be approved.	Seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants and artists. Incorporate feedback in Producers’ workflow. Workflow finalised by 2024.
Create a framework and guide for producers to budget for access effectively. Develop an access budget protocol for all programming and event projects. Set a minimum access budget requirement for project approval.	Research and seek advice from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants and Disability led art organisations. Implement budget protocol and approval process organisation wide starting from 2023 onwards.
Improve existing Activation Sheet with access information and protocol. Deliver accompanying casual staff training in d/Deaf and Disability awareness.	By 2023, Activation Sheet updated and annual casual staff training in d/Deaf and Disability awareness implemented.
Improve existing Production Sheet with access information and protocol. Deliver accompanying casual staff training in d/Deaf and Disability awareness.	By 2023, Production Sheet is updated and annual casual staff training in d/Deaf and Disability awareness is implemented.
Programming team develop a standardised plan about accessibility across all programming, inclusive of exhibitions.	Receive and review feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants, artists and community. Access audit of current programming complete by 2023. Incorporate feedback into plan and implement from 2024 onwards.
Develop standardised artist fees, framework for artwork sales and insurance of artworks.	Research and develop framework by 2023.
Establish an introduction pack for new contractors that includes key access information about how we work.	Induction plan to be implemented by 2023. Continuously seek feedback from d/Deaf and Disabled consultants and artists, review induction pack annually.

EXPERIENCE

We will develop a cohesive and consistent approach to delivering accessible experiences for visitors and industry.

We will do this by:

- Research and action precinct-wide upgrades to improve the physical accessibility of our venues.
- Ensure our marketing and online experience embeds accessibility across all channels and includes targets to engage with d/Deaf and Disabled communities.

Key Actions:
EXPERIENCE

Precinct-wide upgrades to physical infrastructure to support accessible experiences.

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Redesign of reception desk, bar, bar tables and associated infrastructure to meet diverse access requirements.	d/Deaf and Disabled access consultants and advisors to review design brief, incorporate feedback in brief, seek building quote by 2023. Seek funding for infrastructure from 2024 onwards.
Install tactile surface indicators within the building	d/Deaf and Disabled access consultants and advisors to review design brief, incorporate feedback in brief, seek installation quote by 2023. Seek funding for installation from 2024 onwards.
Advocate to install auto doors where possible.	d/Deaf and Disabled access consultants and advisors to review design brief, incorporate feedback in brief, seek installation quote by 2023. Seek funding for installation from 2024 onwards.
Review toilet facilities and placement across precinct. Develop specific recommendations to include in precinct plan and advocate to MCC.	d/Deaf and Disabled access consultants and advisors to review design brief and recommendations. Include recommendations in precinct plan and advocate to MCC.
Raise funds to purchase accessible van.	Funds raised by 2023. Receive feedback about accessible van requirements from d/Deaf and Disabled artists and community members, ensure requirements are met when purchasing new van.
Embed access in precinct plan as a standing agenda item on Precinct Plan Project Steering Committee.	Ensure d/Deaf and Disabled access consultants and advisors are part of the Steering Committee, ensure d/Deaf and Disabled artists are part of the consultation sessions and feedback is included in planning and design stages.
Engage our hearing aid loop in our Performance Space, provide quiet and relaxed spaces at events, expand online events, increase awareness of accessible events within the organisation and general public.	Consult with d/Deaf and Disabled advisors about accessible events. Incorporate feedback into Production Sheet. Update and maintain consistent onsite and online accessibility communications. Revise audience survey to include feedback on event accessibility. Action by 2023. Continuously review audience survey responses and integrate feedback into Production Sheet.

**Key Actions:
EXPERIENCE**

Ensure our Marketing Strategy includes strategies to embed access across all channels and includes targets to engage with Disabled-led channels and d/Deaf and Disabled networks.

ACTION	OUTCOME AND EVALUATION
Develop website improvement strategy and action plan.	Consult with d/Deaf and Disabled advisors to complete an improvement strategy by 2023. Incorporate accessible design elements and plugins in line with WCAG in strategy. Action improvements from 2024 onwards.
Develop social media improvement strategy and action plan.	Improvement strategy and action plan completed by 2023 in consultation with d/Deaf and Disabled advisors. Ensure accessibility is embedded within all design elements in social media and electronic communications including images description, alt text, accessible language and formatting, caption videos. Action improvements from 2024 onwards.
Develop minimum requirements for access information for all events. Have consistent access information on website, ticketing, on the ground event signage and protocol.	Improvement strategy and action plan completed by 2023 in consultation with d/Deaf and Disabled advisors and community members. Implement strategy from 2024 onwards.
Improve wayfinding information for audience and visitors.	Improvement strategy and action plan completed by 2023 in consultation with d/Deaf and Disabled advisors, artists and community members. Implement strategy from 2024 onwards.
Develop resources for getting to and from Footscray Community Art. Create videos, audio descriptions and documents detailing transit routes with a focus on access considerations.	Resources co- developed with d/Deaf and Disabled artists and community members. Resources live and public from 2024 onwards.



Thank you

We want to thank:

- LOOM Arts Management and their Consultant Team
- Arts Access Victoria
- Janice Florence
- Margaret Mayhew
- Margherita Coppolino
- Hannah Morphy-Walsh
- Our ArtLife artists, families, carers and community
- Our Staff and Board

Image Credits in Order of Appearance:

COVER Artist Chelle Destefano at the launch of *What I Wish I'd Told You* exhibition (2022), Image by Matto Lucas.

PAGE 2 *Wominjeka* (2022). Image by Gianna Rizzo.

PAGE 3 *Disability Pride*, Larissa MacFarlane (2017). Image by Jody Haines.

PAGE 5 Disability Action Plan Consultation. Image by Gianna Rizzo.

PAGE 8 *Uncle Larry Walsh*, Daniela Rodriguez (2018). *Marks I*, Brook Andrew (2012). Image Supplied
What I Wish I'd Told You exhibition (2022), Chelle Destefano & Claire Bridge. Image by Matto Lucas.

PAGE 11 *A Bell Rings Across the Valley* exhibition (2022), Shivanjani Lal. Image by Jackie Dixon.

Artist Chelle Destefano at the launch of *What I Wish I'd Told You* exhibition (2022), Image by Matto Lucas.

PAGE 15 *Sekala Niskala* exhibition (2023). Image by Gianna Rizzo.

Disability Action Plan Community Feedback Day Consultation (2022) Image by Matto Lucas.

Interplay (2022), Image by Alan Weedon.

PAGE 19 Disability Action Plan Community Feedback Day Consultation (2022) Image by Matto Lucas.

PAGE 21 Disability Action Plan Community Feedback Day Consultation (2022) Image by Matto Lucas.

PAGE 22 Disability Forum (2018). Image by Raphael Recht.

PAGE 31 *Arising* exhibition (2020), artwork by Megan Hunter. Image by Gianna Rizzo.

BLM exhibition (2022), Ibbi Ibrahim. Image by Gianna Rizzo.

PAGE 36 BLM and *Closer* exhibition launch (2022). Image by Gianna Rizzo.

Artist Diego Pizarro at the launch of *Electric Man* exhibition (2022). Image by Gianna Rizzo.

PAGE 38 Artist Lindsay Sutherland. Image by Mito Elias.

BACKCOVER *Field of Sunflowers* (2023), Artwork by Lindsay Sutherland. Image Supplied

Lindsay Sutherland

Lindsay Sutherland is a multi disciplinary artist with a strong painting practice. She has exhibited work across Melbourne in group shows for close to a decade. Often using acrylics and inks her gestural strokes create playful landscapes of colour. Drawing on nature, dance, music and trips away as inspiration, Lindsay's abstract pieces are expressive experiments and odes to her surrounds.



Backcover artwork
Field of Sunflowers 2023

