

Submission
No 67

INQUIRY INTO ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Accessible Arts

Date Received: 28 July 2024



Accessible Arts NSW Submission:

Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education in New South Wales

28 July 2024

Accessible Arts NSW welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on NSW Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Arts and Music Education.

Accessible Arts is the peak arts and disability organisation in New South Wales. Established in 1986, we work with and for our community to accelerate and celebrate the diverse professional, cultural and social impacts of arts and disability in NSW. We advance the rights of, and opportunities for, people with disability or who are d/Deaf to develop and sustain professional careers in the arts and have equitable access to arts and culture across NSW. We provide a range of programs and services which focus on career advancement, audience development and community engagement for arts practitioners and audiences with disability including creative initiatives, internships, mentorships, artist residencies, professional development workshops, leadership programs, industry education and advice.

Our Submission focusses on the following Terms of Reference item:

iv. the role of arts organisations and creative professionals in education and the development of creative skills across the arts

Artists with disability

- Earn on average 42% less than their counterparts (1)
- Experience higher levels of unemployment – 1/3 of artists with disability are unemployed compared to 1/4 of artists without disability) (1)
- Experience numerous barriers within the arts that result in only 9% of professional artists identifying as disabled, despite 18% of Australians identifying as people with disability (2)

Audiences with disability

- Proportionally, audiences with disability attend the arts as much as non-disabled audiences (3)
- 24% of audiences with disability are likely to volunteer in the arts, compared to 14% of non-disabled audiences without disability (3)



- 52% of audiences with disability engage with arts online, compared to 41% of non-disabled audiences (3)

People with Disability

- People with disability experience higher rates of unemployment, at a rate of 10% (4)
- People with disability are twice as likely to be in financial stress than those who do not have disability – 20% of people with disability compared to 9% of non-disabled people (5)
- 45% of people with disability in Australia are living either near or below the poverty line, more than double the OECD average of 22% (6)
- 52% of complaints lodged with Australian Human Rights Commission are against businesses and related to disability (7)
- Australia ranks 21st out of 29 OECD countries in employment participation rates for people with disability (8)

Due to the inaccessibility of mainstream education pathways within arts and music education across NSW, both metro and regional areas, Accessible Arts NSW continues to provide a range of programs and services that provide alternative education pathways for the professional development of artists with disability. These pathways are inclusive, disability-led, contain strong awareness of disability art, access, creative access, and are delivered within accessible and adaptable formats. Some of these alternative [opportunities](#) include:

1. Advance Your Career Professional Development Forums
2. Access Rider Workshops
3. Next Level Creative Mentorships with leading arts organisations including Bangarra Dance, Griffin Theatre, Belvoir St Theatre, Murrumbidgee Theatre, Sydney Opera House, and Sydney Dance Company.
4. Ripple: Disability and Culturally Diverse Internship Programs 2022 and 2023
5. ArtScreen Video Art Mentorship in partnership with Museum of Contemporary Art.

These pathway opportunities, provided in partnership with numerous arts organisations across NSW including regional areas, provide accessible and professional alternative learning environments for artists with disability. More than 80% of participants report a high level of satisfaction with the programs, as well as the vital need and opportunity to connect with the industry and other artists with



disability. In 2023, Accessible Arts provided education and alternative pathways to more than 200 artists with disability across NSW.

In tandem, Accessible Arts also provides broad industry support and education across all arts and culture industries, art forms, including regional areas, to improve awareness and capacity for organisations and companies to improve their ability to work accessibly and inclusively. These [trainings](#) include:

1. Disability Confidence Training
2. Creative Access
3. Creating Inclusive Workplaces
4. Accessible Festivals and Events
5. Accessible Marketing Workshop
6. How to Be a Good Ally.

In 2023, Accessible Arts provided 84 training sessions to 2133, demonstrating strong sector demand for increased practical knowledge regarding access and inclusion is required for the industry to ensure pathways for artists with disability, as well as events, performers and programs for audience with disability, are accessible.

At present there appears to be a lack of awareness across education institutions regarding:

1. The need to create accessible education programs for students with disability and how to practically provide ongoing support.
2. The need to provide content within arts and music education curriculums that includes knowledge building and practical implementation of accessibility features within creative works and programs such as Auslan, captioning, audio description, accessible costume and set-building design, etc.



Summary of Accessible Arts NSW recommendations:

1. Recognise the need for increased accessibility and inclusion across all levels of education for students with disability, including within regional areas of NSW.
2. Recognise the demonstrated need for alternative accessible pathways of education for artists with disability provided across the state by Accessible Arts NSW, provided in partnership with arts and cultural organisations.
3. Recognise the urgent need for practical and creative access and inclusion awareness to be built into all creative practice education curriculums across all levels of education across NSW including how to create new works, events, programs and exhibitions that are accessible for audiences with disability.
4. Assign increased funding to alternative education pathways for artists with disability to directly access the arts and education sector in the likes of Create NSW's [Createability Internship Program](#).

References:

- (1) Throsby D & Petetskaya K 2017, *Making Art Work: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia*, Australia Council for the Arts.
- (2) [Research overview of arts and disability in Australia | Office for the Arts](#)
- (3) 2016 [Connecting Australians: National Arts Participation Survey](#) Australia Council for the Arts
- (4) [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)
- (5) [People with disability in Australia 2022: in brief, About – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(aihw.gov.au\)](#)
- (6) Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2011. '[Disability expectations – Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia](#)'
- (7) [Australian Human Rights Commission 2021-22 Complaint statistics](#)
- (8) Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2011. '[Disability expectations – Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia](#)'.