



# National Arts and Disability Strategy

Plain English Version





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Plain English version (abridged)

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Produced by the Cultural Ministers Council

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# Introduction from the Cultural Ministers Council

The Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) is a group that includes all the government ministers in Australia who are responsible for arts and cultural policy and programs. This includes the ministers from the:

Australian Government

Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government

New South Wales Government

Northern Territory Government

Queensland Government

Government of South Australia

Tasmanian Government

Victorian Government

Government of Western Australia.

CMC has agreed to this National Arts and Disability Strategy. They have done this to make sure that people with a disability can take part in the arts and culture just like other Australians.

This document provides a short version of the Strategy, in language that is easy to understand.

For a full version of the Strategy you can contact the CMC Secretariat at:

Web: [www.cmc.gov.au](http://www.cmc.gov.au)

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Arts and culture in Australia support:

- Inclusion (everyone being able to take part in society the best they can without being discriminated against).
- Harmony (people understanding each other and not arguing).





- Diversity (people understanding that everyone is different and that difference is a good thing).
- Community (people living in the same area and sharing things in common).
- Creativity (people discovering new ideas and doing new things).

One in five people in Australia have some type of disability. Their artistic goals and achievements are a valuable part of Australia's culture.

People with a disability may face barriers to their artistic expression:

- physical barriers
- financial barriers
- information barriers
- attitude barriers.

These barriers can stop people from being able to create, or to be a part of arts and cultural activities.

Through CMC, the governments in Australia have agreed to work to improve the opportunities that people with a disability have to participate in the arts and culture.

This National Arts and Disability Strategy includes feedback from people with a disability and the organisations that support them.

This Strategy is one part of many government actions to help people with a disability to take part in Australian life. This is called 'social inclusion'. More information on 'social inclusion' is in the definitions section at page 26.



Each government will be responsible for programs in their own state or territory. Governments might also work together to create projects that take place in more than one state or territory.

Every year CMC will give a report on how this Strategy is working; they will put this on the Internet at [www.cmc.gov.au](http://www.cmc.gov.au).

Every three years CMC will look at whether this Strategy needs to be changed, to make it work better.



# The Vision

This vision says what the National Arts and Disability Strategy is trying to achieve.

That people with a disability can take part in the arts and culture, just like anybody else.

That everyone understands that the artistic work and goals of people with a disability are important.



# Key Principles of this Strategy

It is important that this Strategy makes a difference to people with a disability who want to take part in the arts and culture. To do this, CMC has agreed on eight main ideas. These are:

1. Everyone has the right to go to and take part in high quality arts and cultural activities.
2. Workers and artists with a disability will have the same opportunities to take part in the arts and culture as those who do not have a disability.
3. When people with a disability take part in the arts we all have a stronger and more creative society.

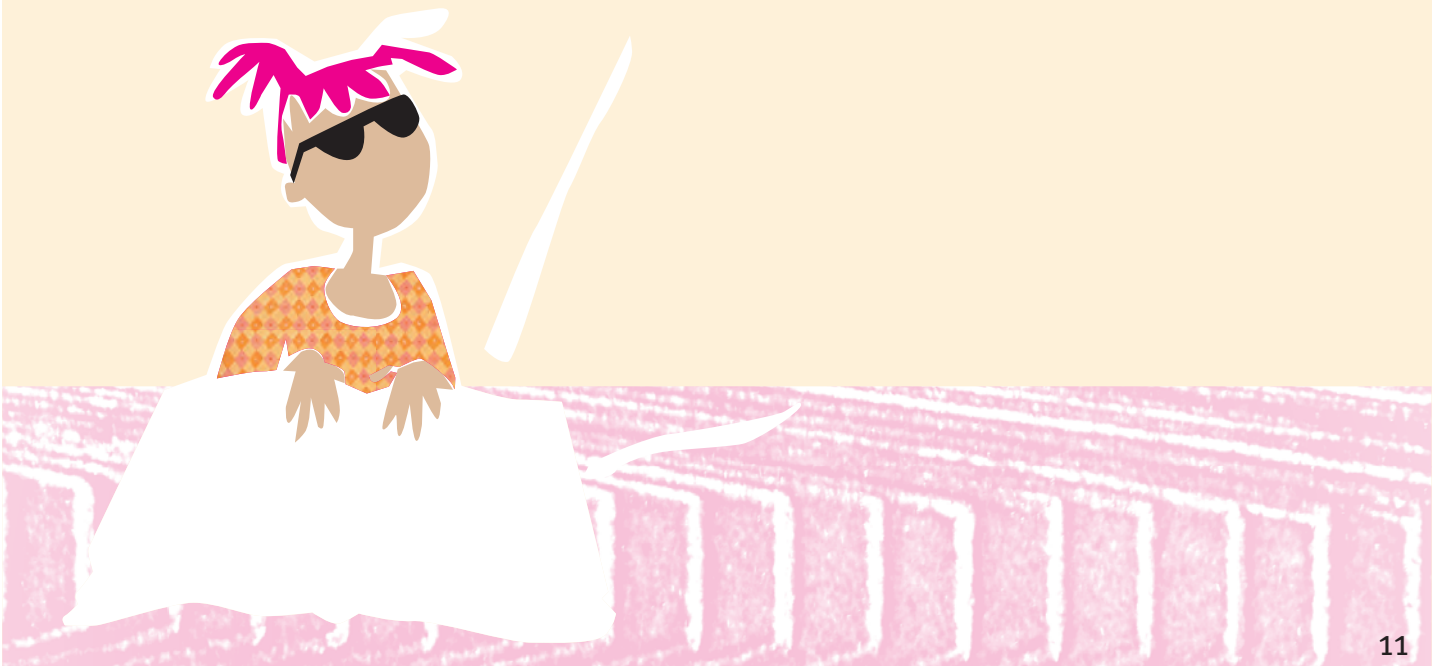


4. People with a disability have different experiences from each other and they have different needs.
5. People with a disability will take part in making decisions about arts and cultural activities that involve them.
6. Improving access and participation by people with a disability will make arts programs that are already taking place, more successful.
7. There are lots of people who can help people with a disability take part in arts and cultural activities. They include:
  - families
  - supporters
  - health, disability and community service providers
  - arts and cultural organisations
  - training education and employment agencies
  - businesses, sponsors and donors
  - local government.
8. All the governments in Australia will work together to make sure this Strategy makes a difference.

# The Strategy has 4 Focus areas

This Strategy identifies four areas for action that governments will focus on. These are:

- 1. Access and participation** – helping people with a disability to take part in the arts and culture, as participants or as part of the audience.
- 2. Arts and cultural practice** – helping artists and arts workers who have a disability to be the best they can.
- 3. Audience development** – helping audiences to see work created by artists with a disability.
- 4. Strategic development** – getting governments to work together to help people with a disability to take part in decisions about the arts and culture.



## Focus area 1: Access and participation

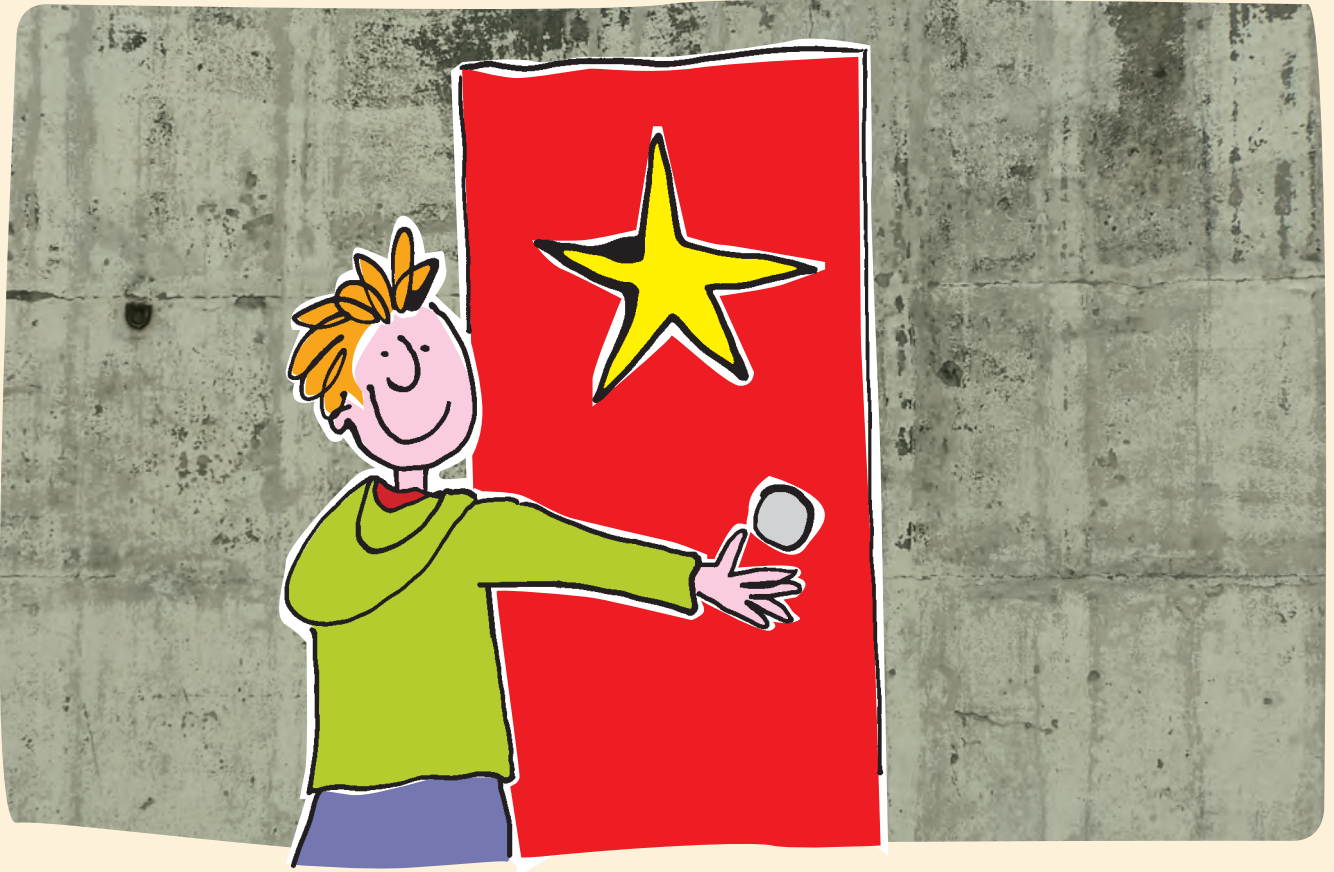
**This is about removing the barriers that make it hard for people with a disability to be part of an audience or to take part in arts and cultural activities.**

**Some barriers may include:**

- **getting to venues:**
  - parking and drop-off areas
  - building location and design
  - seating
  - limited access to backstage areas.







- **lack of available information about:**
  - arts and cultural activities and venues
  - networks
  - booking and ticketing
  - funding support.
- **low quality experiences:**
  - poor signage
  - no sign language
  - no audio loops/FM systems
  - no captioning or audio-description.

- **lack of awareness of disability issues by other people, such as:**
  - arts and cultural organisations
  - venues and presenters
  - ticketing agencies.
- **cost barriers:**
  - ticket costs
  - costs for carers or support workers
  - special equipment and transport.

- All governments want to make it easier for people with a disability to be able to:**
- go to arts and cultural activities.
  - use arts and cultural organisations.



## What will governments do?

### **Governments will work to make sure that:**

**Goal 1:** It is easier for people with a disability to get access to places where arts and cultural activities are happening.

**Goal 2:** People with a disability are able to get information about access to arts and cultural activities, in ways that are easy to use and understand.

**Goal 3:** People with a disability have access to quality arts and cultural activities.

**Goal 4:** Everyone understands the value of people with a disability taking part in arts and cultural activities. People with a disability are encouraged to take part in arts and cultural activities.

## How will they do it?

### **Governments will:**

- Support the best access to arts and cultural activities for people with a disability.
- Help arts and cultural organisations to train more staff to understand the needs of people with a disability.
- Work with arts and cultural organisations to achieve these goals.

## Focus area 2: Arts and cultural practice

**This is about removing the barriers which stop artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability from meeting their goals.**



- Artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability have the same artistic needs and goals as other people
- There are barriers that can stop artists and workers in the arts from doing what they want to do:
  - They may have low incomes, and extra costs.
  - They may not be able to get to training and jobs.
  - They may feel cut-off from others.
  - They require special arrangements to help them practice their art form.
  - Information about funding can be difficult to find.
  - Other peoples' attitudes may stop artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability doing what they want to do.
- If governments work together, these things can be improved.

## What will governments do?

### **Governments will work to make sure that:**

**Goal 1:** People with a disability have better access to arts and cultural funding programs than they do now.

**Goal 2:** Artists with a disability have more opportunities to show their work than they do now.

**Goal 3:** Artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability have better access to mentoring and training than they do now.

**Goal 4:** Artists and arts/cultural workers have more opportunities to work in the arts and cultural sector than they do now.



## How will they do it?

- Look at current programs and try to improve them.
- Talk to arts and cultural organisations about how they can help.
- Encourage disability awareness training.
- Build links between arts and disability organisations.
- Build new opportunities for teaching and job placements.

## Focus area 3: Audience development

**This is about building audiences for artistic works created by artists with a disability.**

- Artists with a disability can bring new and different ideas.
- They can make audiences think and change their attitudes.
- Work by artists with a disability can help to break down barriers.
- Audiences need more opportunities to see the talents and work of artists with a disability.
- It can be hard for artists with a disability to reach more people.

### What will governments do?

**Governments will work to make sure that:**

**Goal 1:** There are more opportunities for audiences to experience work by artists with a disability than there are now.

## How will they do it?

- Increase publicity for artists with a disability.
- Reward excellent artistic work.
- Support ideas that help artists with a disability to make links with arts organisations, or other artists.
- Do more research on attitudes and behaviours of audiences towards artists with a disability.



## Focus area 4: Strategic development

**This is about helping people with a disability to have more of a say in planning and decisions about the arts and culture.**

Governments can work together to help people with a disability to have better opportunities to take part in arts and cultural activities. They can:

- Improve government policy for arts and disability issues.
- Improve arts and cultural services for people with a disability.
- Show the benefits of including people with a disability more in cultural life.
- Give more people with a disability a say in making decisions about the arts and culture.

### What will governments do?

**Goal 1:** Look more carefully at the needs and goals of people with a disability and make sure that these are being met. Measure how decisions about art and culture affect people with a disability.



## How will they do it?

- Make more links between the Australian Government and state, territory and local governments and peak bodies.
- Encourage, support and promote people with a disability in arts and cultural policy making.
- Fill gaps in research and data — measure how much people with a disability take part in the arts and culture.



# Priority projects

Each government will look at what they are doing now, and will develop projects, to make sure that this Strategy makes a change for the better.

Some projects that could be developed are:

## **1. A National Network**

Develop better links between:

- Australian Government
- state and territory governments
- local governments
- arts and disability organisations.

## **2. Disability Action Plans**

Work to develop:

- Disability Action Plans for arts and cultural organisations and venues
- materials to help arts and cultural organisations involve people with a disability, including templates, checklists, and case studies
- information for arts and cultural organisations about the best ways to help people with a disability take part in arts and cultural activities.

### 3. Better Information

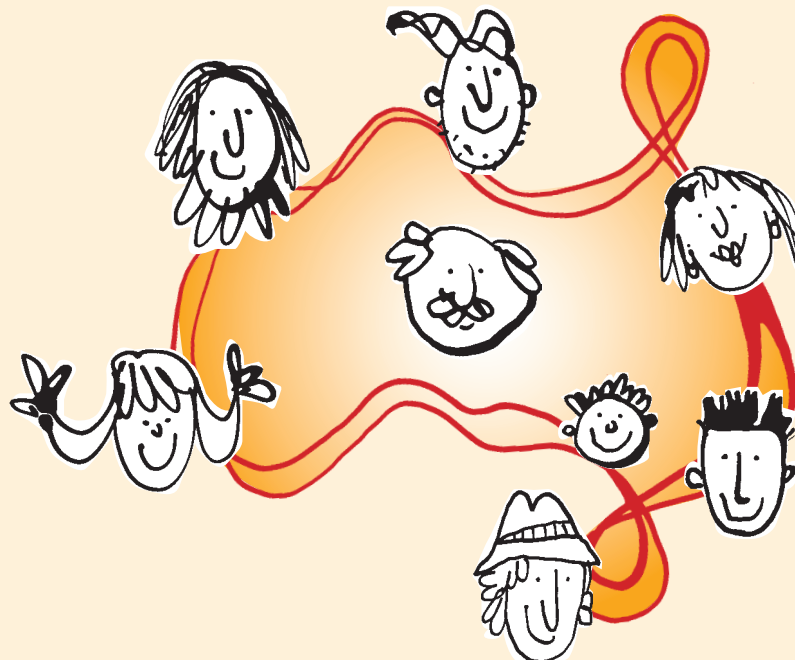
Work to develop:

- one place where information about arts and cultural activities and venues for people with a disability can be found
- information on funding opportunities for people with a disability
- education, training, professional development and jobs for people with a disability.

### 4. National research and data

Work together to:

- find gaps in research and data
- research arts and disability issues
- talk to more people with a disability about what they want from the arts and culture.



## **5. National touring circuit**

- Think about a new national touring circuit for art produced by people with a disability.

## **6. Private sector support**

- Work closely with the Australia Business Arts Foundation and ArtSupport Australia to give information about sponsorship to artists and arts/cultural workers with a disability.

## **7. Raising awareness**

- Work to show excellent work by artists with a disability.

## **8. Arts and cultural education and experiences**

- Find ways to help children and young people with a disability get opportunities to experience arts and cultural activities.

## **9. The film, television and broadcast industry**

- Work to make it easier for people with a disability to enjoy films, television and broadcasts—more programs in Auslan, captioning, audio-description services and casting artists with a disability.

# Terms and Definitions

## Access

This refers to people being able to take part in arts and cultural activities. It also refers to people being able to get to places where arts and cultural activities are taking place.

## Artists

These are people who are performers, visual artists, writers, multimedia artists, directors and designers.

## Arts/cultural worker

This is anyone who works in the arts and cultural community.

## Arts and cultural activities

This includes performances, exhibitions, concerts; and the programs that take place in theatres, museums, galleries, libraries, cinemas and other cultural places (not simply recreation, leisure and sporting activities).

## Disability

In this strategy, 'people with a disability' means people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, combined with other barriers, may get in the way of them being able to participate in society like everyone else.

## Social inclusion

This means that all Australians are able to participate fully in Australian society without being discriminated against. It means that all Australians have the opportunity to:

- get a job,
- use services,
- connect with family, friends, work, personal interests and local community,
- handle personal crisis,
- be heard.



