

ACCESSING CHANGE
Arts, Disability and Strategies for
Inclusion






Accessible Arts

- Accessible Arts (AArts) is the peak arts and disability organisation in NSW
- It is part of a national organisation, DADAA, which has members from all States
- AArts receives core funding from the NSW Ministry for the Arts and the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.
- We believe in **CREATIVITY, EXPRESSION and INCLUSION**

Accessible Arts Mission

- The mission of AArts is promote access to and participation in all artforms and cultural activities for people with disabilities
 - Our vision is to take the leading role in developing innovative strategies that engage the arts industry and disability sector in positive action for the inclusion of people with disabilities
 - We advocate for all people with disabilities
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Audience Development Project

- AArts clearly identified a need for a position that addressed audience development strategies for people with disabilities
- The ADO position was created and is funded by the Australia Council and the NSW Ministry of Arts
- The position is in the second of three years of funding

Aims of ADO Position

- Developing audience development and marketing strategies to encourage the participation of people with disabilities
- Brokering links between the sectors
- Raising awareness of disability issues in the arts
- Developing resource material to assist in service provision
- Developing and presenting education programs
- Developing evaluation techniques
- Advising the arts community generally on disability issues
- Reporting to funding bodies and providing expert advice as needed

Reasons for change

- The Disability Discrimination act (1992), requiring equal access to goods, services, employment, education, facilities
- Disability community is a significant market (20% of the population and growing)
- Funding received to provide services to the community should include all community members
- People with disabilities are a diverse and interested audience group
- The changes you make to improve disability access will benefit all members of the community
- Reasons for change are: LEGAL, ETHICAL and MAKE GOOD SENSE

Barriers to inclusion

- Limited disability awareness
- Finite resources
- Competing, sometimes conflicting, interests between sectors
- Lack of understanding of the disability market
- Mistrust in the disability sector
- Confusion as to the role of audience development
- Physical barriers in arts institutions
- Lack of exposure of disability arts
- Limited resource material

Other issues affecting the position

- Little peer reference in Australia
- Many different stakeholders
- Scope of the position
 - Geographic spread (all of NSW)
 - Different disability groups with differing needs and interests
 - Working across all artforms

Advocacy strategies

- Consultation with individuals and within sector
- Establishing ways to bring sectors together
- Ensuring that the ADO is open for comments, feedback & advice
- Strategic planning about what can be achieved - focusing on longterm products & resources
- Encouraging ownership of access and inclusion issues
- Broadening the idea of audiences - creating a model of participation
- Encouraging the idea of best practice
- Realistic goal setting and planning for the future, not for an immediate result
- Different solutions for different situations

ADO Projects

- TAFE NSW: Development of Arts Accessibility Modules
- Sydney 2002 Gay Games
- Casula Powerhouse
- Centenary of Federation
- Sydney Festival
- Belvoir St Theatre
- Sydney Opera House
- MCA

Where to from here?

- Continuing to provide training and educational opportunities
- Developing resources
- Encouraging the arts sector to prioritise disability issues
- Strengthening and creating links
- Working within regional and rural NSW
- International Day of People with a Disability 2002
- Encouraging people with disabilities to self advocate and providing opportunities for them to do so through:
 - volunteer work
 - employment opportunities
 - using the Disability Discrimination Act to force change when necessary
 - acting on advisory committees & sitting on boards