



Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan

2024–2027



MUSEUMS
VICTORIA

Acknowledgement of Country

Museums Victoria acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung Bunurong peoples of the eastern Kulin Nations where we work, and First Peoples across Victoria and Australia.

FEEDBACK ON THE PLAN

People outside the museum can provide us with feedback in the following ways.

Staff can give feedback to People & Culture via MV Helpdesk.

We will respond to queries within 30 days.

Online: Feedback and complaints
Museums Victoria

Phone: 13 11 02

Write to: Chief Operating Officer
Museums Victoria
GPO Box 666
Melbourne Victoria, 3001

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VERSIONS OF THIS PLAN

Explore the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024–2027 through the following versions.

- Summary
- Plain language
- Easy English
- Auslan video



Message from the Chief Executive Officer and Director

I am pleased to introduce Museums Victoria's Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027.

At Museums Victoria we aim for our destinations, experiences, people and audiences to reflect the diversity of contemporary Victoria. An important aspect of this is for all of our visitors to feel welcome, and our employees feel they belong, and their contributions are valued.

Achieving this requires conscious, ongoing commitment. Collaboratively developing the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 and sharing it publicly reflects Museums Victoria's ongoing commitment to advancing inclusion and belonging across our physical and online sites.

We acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of the community and our employees to diversity and inclusion at Museums Victoria. The Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 consolidates and builds on this through an organisation-wide focus on awareness, consultation and feedback to better understand and enhance visitor and staff experiences. We look forward to strengthening and embedding these through the operational actions that flow from this strategic plan.

We extend our appreciation to all who helped develop the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027, especially Arts Access Victoria for their advice and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Lynley Crosswell'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Lynley' being more prominent.

Lynley Crosswell
Chief Executive Officer and Director

Purpose

The purpose of this Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 is to outline Museums Victoria's consolidated, organisation-wide priority actions. This lays the groundwork for a longer-term process of advancing accessibility and inclusion at Museums Victoria both online and onsite. It will do this by consolidating, providing clear strategic intent and monitoring its related actions.

By the end of this Plan period Museums Victoria aims to have achieved:

- Regular, relevant disability inclusion training for MV Workers across the organisation with a system of ongoing monitoring of the impact of that training
- Clear consultation processes with Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent people across all divisions with advice informing the planning of major projects such as: Website upgrade, building upgrades, as well as ongoing activities in exhibition design and recruitment processes
- Integrated accessible feedback processes with regular monitoring and reporting of access issues and enquiries received by the multiple channels of the museum.



Background to this plan

This Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan has been in development since 2021, as a replacement for the previous Disability Action Plan.

Within Museums Victoria this plan aligns with the Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025 (GEAP) and the Museums Victoria’s Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2023–2025.

In 2023 the Accessibility Employee Network held a specific planning day focusing on accessibility and identified some key areas for action that have been incorporated into this organisation-wide Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan.

The terminology used in the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan was developed through a consultation process.

For information on Guiding legislation refer to Appendix 1.

For information on Key Terminology and Concepts refer to Appendix 2.

Methodology

Arts Access Victoria was commissioned to support Museums Victoria to develop an Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan.

The process incorporated consultation with all Museums Victoria directorates and Deaf and Disabled people including:

- Anonymous staff survey with 150 responses
- A series of internal staff focus groups with over 30 attendees
- Analysis of 15 months of visitor survey feedback from people self-identifying as having a disability
- An external focus group of Deaf and Disabled advisors

An organisational Working Group was convened to provide strategic input into the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan’s development.



Focus and actions

The consultation generated rich contributions and suggestions which were considered alongside Museums Victoria's strategic and operational priorities. This led to the identification of overarching organisational objectives, key areas of focus and actions to be incorporated into the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027. Longer term actions are noted to support continuous and seamless evolution beyond this Plan.

ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Museums Victoria will:

- 1 embed awareness and a commitment to Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent inclusion throughout all leadership structures
- 2 promote accessible recruitment and Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent inclusion and cultural safety for all MV Workers
- 3 continuously improve accessible and inclusive communication and feedback mechanisms across all onsite and online channels
- 4 continuously improve access in programs, exhibitions and events planning and delivery and information provision
- 5 support accessible and inclusive experiences by providing accessibility information, access supports and clear feedback processes to visitors, and
- 6 continuously improve onsite accessibility for Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent visitors and MV Workers

AREAS OF FOCUS

- 1 Awareness – promote awareness of disability inclusion, and support staff and managers with information in order to follow best practice.
- 2 Consultation – embed consultation with Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent advisors throughout the organisation at the heart of decision making.
- 3 Feedback – ensure that there are clear, accessible mechanisms for all MV Workers and visitors to provide feedback on experiences of the website and the physical spaces of the museums and ensure this feedback is followed up.

Actions

OBJECTIVE 1

Museums Victoria (MV) will embed awareness and a commitment to Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent inclusion throughout all leadership structures

Led through: Executive and Senior Managers

Actions for this plan:

- MV Board and MV Leadership Forum will have training in Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent cultural safety
- MV executive will identify and develop a clear budget for Disability Access across MV
- Monitoring of Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan through MV executive team
- MV leadership will develop and implement a process for consultation with Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent advisors

Longer term actions:

- Museums Victoria will encourage Board composition to reflect the State Government's diversity objectives
- MV executive will have clear budget line items for Disability Access in all divisions

OBJECTIVE 2

Museums Victoria will promote accessible recruitment and Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent inclusion and cultural safety for all MV Workers

Led through: People & Culture

Actions for this plan:

- People & Culture will continue to support the Accessibility Employee Network and reporting to MV Leadership Forum and other channels
- People & Culture will support the deeper analysis of the research/feedback from April-May 2024 to identify key issues
- People & Culture will develop a plan to implement best practice in accessible recruitment based on consultation
- People & Culture will compile information on access requests and adjustment plans

Longer term actions:

- Museums Victoria will incorporate best practice principles in accessible recruitment
- Museums Victoria will ensure all staff have access to Disability inclusion training, with the impact of that training monitored to ensure it is relevant

Actions

OBJECTIVE 3

Museums Victoria will continuously improve accessible and inclusive communication and feedback mechanisms across all onsite and online channels

Led through: Marketing & Communication (M&C) and Digital Life

Actions for this plan:

- M&C & Digital Life staff will have training in accessible communication
- Museums Victoria's onsite and online digital channels will receive an accessibility audit from a specialist agency
- Museums Victoria will have clear, updated information about access to online materials and physical sites of Museums Victoria
- Museums Victoria's website will have clear visitor feedback processes
- Digital Life will incorporate lived experience advisory/consulting process to inform the MV website upgrade that is consistent with the MV wide process developed within Objective 1
- M&C and Digital Life will support the deeper analysis of the research/feedback from April-May 2024 to identify key issues

Longer term actions:

- M&C / Digital Life will continuously improve feedback mechanisms to be more accessible
- Museums Victoria will develop a strategy to manage accessible digital access to collections

OBJECTIVE 4

Museums Victoria will continuously improve access in programs, exhibitions and events planning and delivery and information provision

Led through: Exhibitions and Experiences (E&E) division (Exhibitions, Public Programs, Audience Insights, Digital Life Events), Commercial Operations (Commercial), Visitor Experience (VE) and Marketing & Communications (M&C)

Actions for this plan:

- E&E and Commercial will support the deeper analysis of the research/feedback from April-May 2024 to identify key issues
- E&E will continue to embed and monitor Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent consultation in program and exhibition development
- E&E, Commercial, VE and M&C will improve on-site access information, including wayfinding, sensory maps, etc.
- E&E, Commercial, VE and M&C will improve online access information, including wayfinding, sensory maps, etc.
- E&E, Commercial and VE will develop plans for better feedback processes and follow up of feedback

Longer term actions:

- E&E will seek external funding for access upgrades for older museum exhibits
- E&E will incorporate lived experience advisory/consulting process into development of programs and exhibitions that is consistent with the MV wide process developed within Objective 1
- E&E will plan for more Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent led programs and events

Actions

OBJECTIVE 5

Museums Victoria will support accessible and inclusive experiences by providing accessibility information, access supports and clear feedback processes to visitors

Led through: Visitor Experience (VE) and Commercial Operations (Commercial)

Actions for this plan:

- VE and Commercial will implement a strategy for all Front of House staff and contractors to have ongoing monitored Disability support training
- VE and Commercial will have clearer access information/wayfinding on site
- VE and Commercial will review reporting of onsite access feedback/issues like the OH&S reports

Longer term actions:

- VE and Commercial in conjunction with Audience Insights will research more accessible on-site feedback mechanisms, including use of digital feedback mechanisms
- All Front of House staff and contractors will have ongoing monitored Disability support training

OBJECTIVE 6

Museums Victoria's museums will continuously improve onsite accessibility for Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent visitors and staff

Led through: Strategic Facilities Management (SFM) and Strategic Capital Programs (SCP)

Actions for this plan:

- SFM will work with Marketing & Communication, Visitor Experience and Commercial Operations to ensure accessible information is provided about access barriers and mitigation during site upgrades/repairs
- SFM will have an accessibility audit of all sites that includes consultation with Deaf, Disabled and neurodivergent advisors
- SFM will develop a long-term plan for site upgrades and maintenance to ensure accessibility to current premises during construction and maintenance
- SFM and SCP will work with other sectors to seek additional capital works funding to address key physical barriers
- SFM will embed lived experience consultation in site upgrade plans
- SFM and SCP will research additional funding for capital works projects

Longer term actions:

- SFM will embed lived experience consultants into site planning and upgrades
- SFM will have resources to upgrade access across all museum sites



Evaluation and monitoring

Evaluation will be undertaken by drawing on a range of data (as relevant) including the following internal and external sources.

External

- Audience Insights regular visitor and public programs surveys
- Ask Us webform/phone calls
- Visitor Experience reports
- Collated feedback

Internal

- People and Culture data
- Accessibility Employee Network
- ICT helpdesk requests

The Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan will be monitored by People & Culture and integrated as part of our Strategic, Corporate and Business Planning.

Directors and Senior Managers of departments named in the Accessibility & Inclusion Action Plan will embed actions into operational plans and report as per standard processes. Additionally, feedback and reporting updates as per this plan will be provided by operational leads to People & Culture for whole-of-organisation reporting purposes such as to the MV executive, MV Leadership Forum, Accessibility Employee Network and all staff.

Budget commitment

Museums Victoria will commit budget lines for these key Accessibility and Inclusion actions, specifically to ensure the following:

- All staff have access to relevant training and information.
- All divisions embed a process of consultation with lived experience advisors in developing their access projects.
- All divisions have a process of feedback and reporting.



Appendix 1

GUIDING LEGISLATION, POLICY AND PLANNING

Commonwealth of Australia Disability Discrimination Act (1992)

Victorian Public Service Code of Conduct

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006

Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010)

Victorian Disability Act 2006 (service providers)

Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan (2022–2026)

Museums Victoria Values

Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025 (GEAP)

MV Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2023–2025

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover

Title: 'Dinosaurs and Fossils' Kindergarten Program Visit:

Outreach Program: Melbourne Museum

Photographer: Rodney Start

Source: Museums Victoria

Page 4

Title: Lynley Crosswell, Chief Executive Officer and Director

Photographer: Phoebe Powell

Source: Museums Victoria

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Title: 'Dinosaurs and Fossils' Kindergarten Program Visit:

Outreach Program: Melbourne Museum

Photographer: Rodney Start

Source: Museums Victoria

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Title: Auslan Tour: Public Programs: Melbourne Museum

Photographer: Rodney Start

Source: Museums Victoria

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Title: STEM Design Sprint - Future Humans: Enabling and Assistive Technology, May 2023: Education Program: Scienceworks

Photographer: Rodney Start

Source: Museums Victoria

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Title: Ground Up Social Story, Autism Friendly Museum: Accessibility Photoshoot: Scienceworks

Photographer: Benjamin Healley

Source: Museums Victoria

Appendix 2

KEY TERMINOLOGY AND CONCEPTS

Museums Victoria recognises the range of language applied in the areas of diversity and inclusion and that the language evolves over time. Key terminology and concepts sourced through Arts Access Victoria resources and applied to this Plan are:

Deaf and Disabled people

This includes people with lived experience of discrimination or barriers because of their:

- Visible or invisible differences
- Sensory differences
- Physical differences
- Neurodivergent differences
- Cognitive differences
- Intellectual or developmental differences
- Psychiatric and psychological differences

Disabled people is identity first language, that acknowledges Disability pride and our history as a community in challenging Disabling structures and barriers. It uses capital letter as a mark of respect. Some Disabled people prefer person first language like Person With a Disability (PWD) or Person Living with Disability.

Deaf with the capitalised D refers to people who are proudly and culturally Deaf. They may or may not identify as Disabled. The Deaf community is recognised as a distinct cultural and Linguistic group.

deaf: with a lowercase d refers to people who are medically diagnosed as deaf, but might not identify as culturally Deaf.

d/Deaf refers to people who are hard of hearing, medically diagnosed as deaf, and Deaf-identifying

Self-determined relates to the phrase ‘nothing about us without us’. It means that Disabled people define, describe, create and have control over plans, events or creative expressions with Disabled content.

Lived Experience refers to the experiences that people have of Disability and Ableism. Ableist systems rely on medical diagnosis and classification of Disabled

people. Disabled advocacy centres experiences not diagnosis, so that we can address the barriers that people with similar experiences may also face.

Ableism is the barriers, beliefs and discrimination against Disabled people. Ableism is the oppression of Disabled people- it is systemic and individual, direct and indirect, intentional and unintentional (AAV, 2022)

Equity is where Deaf and Disabled people and communities have full participation in arts organisations as leaders, employees, contractors, visitors and audiences. Equity goes beyond access and inclusion to ensure that Deaf and Disabled people are at the centre of organisations, guiding design programs and activities to ensure everyone has equality of access

Human Rights is an approach for social and cultural participation of Deaf and Disabled people, that comes from the United Nations declaration of human rights. Human rights approaches to inclusion are based on eliminating discrimination, addressing existing barriers for exclusion and developing systems for participation of, accountability to, and empowerment of marginalised people and communities (Paula Abood, Diversity Arts Australia)

Social Model of Disability has been developed by people with Disability and says that people are disabled by barriers in society, or people’s attitudes. It focuses on addressing structural and social barriers so people with disability have more independence, choice and control. (AAV, Choose Art)

Medical model of disability says people are disabled by their impairments or differences, and focuses on individual diagnosis and correction or adaptation to existing systems. It is very different to the social model of Disability.

Universal Design focuses on creating physical structures, social processes and communication methods to allow maximum access to spaces, events and organisations by many people whether they have disability or not.

Worker/s: is defined as an individual who carries out work, paid or unpaid, in any capacity, including (amongst others): an employee; a contractor; a subcontractor; student gaining work experience; and/or a volunteer.



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