

Incite Arts

Disability Engagement Policy and Action Plan

People with disability are a key focus of Incite Arts.

When we say we work with people with disability, we mean anyone with sensory or physical impairments, hidden impairments, intellectual or neurological impairments or mental health issues.

We welcome and value the participation of people with disability in all areas of our work, and we aim to make sure that people with disability have full access to our program, organisation and venues.

People with disability should be able to say what they think, be taken seriously, and feel a sense of ownership in the organisation.

We will achieve this by:

- Undertaking a Disability Action Planning process and monitoring our progress.
- Modeling best practice and encouraging others to do the same.
- Listening to people with disability, acknowledging and responding to their ideas.
- Engage in disability-led processes.
- Let people with disability contribute in ways they feel comfortable with.
- Creating opportunities for people with disability to participate at all levels of the organisation, including program and management decisions.
- Reduce barriers for people with disability to our program, organisation and venues.
- Help change attitudes and practices that discriminate against people with disability.

The following Disability Action Plan will be reviewed and updated each year.

Disability Engagement procedures and templates

The following procedures relate to this policy:

- Disability Action Plan
- Disability Awareness Guidelines

Incite Arts Disability Action Plan (DAP), 2020 - 2025

Goal 1: Incite Arts demonstrates best practice in disability-led arts engagement within Central Australia.

- Make sure our staff, artists and Board members are disability aware and confident.
 - Staff, artist and Board induction includes disability awareness guidelines (ongoing).
- Create opportunities for people with disability to be involved in project design and development:
 - Consultation with members of updated Disability Action Plan (annual).
 - Create other opportunities in consultation with people with disability (ongoing).
- Create opportunities for people with disability to get involved in leadership and decision-making roles.
 - Inform the disability community about opportunities to get involved with Incite as Board members, artists or employees (ongoing).
 - Include specific invitation for people with disability to apply for all opportunities (ongoing).
 - Make sure our recruitment policies and procedures are accessible (ongoing).
 - Employ artist/s or arts workers with disability to deliver projects where possible.
 - Provide opportunities for skills development, practical experience and mentoring (ongoing).

Goal 2: Incite provides high-quality arts projects and skills-development opportunities for people with disability in Alice Springs and the Central Desert region.

- Annual program includes inclusive and accessible arts activities (ongoing).
- Deliver activities in a range of locations, venues and art forms (ongoing).
 - Access costs included in annual budget (ongoing).
 - All participants are asked about access requirements (ongoing).

- Barriers to access are identified and removed wherever possible (ongoing).
- Use access checklist used for all venues (ongoing).
- Establishment of an accessible performing arts group in Central Australia (2014 - ongoing).
- Develop and implement other arts engagement programs (ongoing).

Goal 3: Incite showcases, profiles and advocates for arts and disability culture.

- Make sure our communications and marketing are accessible.
 - Maintain accessible style guide for all publications (ongoing).
 - Launch new accessible website (2022).
 - Planning and program information is available in alternative formats (ongoing)
 - Events begin with acknowledgement of country and the AUSLAN sign for 'welcome' (ongoing).
- Make contact with other organisations to share resources, collaborate on projects and bring new participants to Incite's work. This could include:
 - Acacia Hill School
 - Arts Access Australia (and its network)
 - BINDI Mwerre Anthurre
 - Central Craft
 - Disability Service Organisations in Alice Springs (eg, Lifestyle solutions, Life without Borders)
 - NT Office of the Public Guardian
 - Headspace
 - Mental Health Association of Central Australia (MAHCA)
 - Old Timers
 - Schools (hearing issues)
 - Schools Learning Units
- Contribute to conversations, sector-based policy issues, political agendas and debates that affect people with disability's engagement in the arts (ongoing).

- Actively participate in Arts Access Australia network (ongoing).
- Co-produce the NT Access Awards with Arts Access Darwin (annually).
- Provide information, advice and guidance to people with disability, family and support workers, etc (ongoing).

Incite Arts Disability Awareness Guidelines

These guidelines provide an introduction to disability awareness and outline how we expect our staff, Board members, artists and volunteers to work with people with disability.

Incite's staff and artists will:

- Make sure they're familiar with the Incite Arts Way of Working policy, and follow its guidelines.
- Put the person first:
 - When you talk about people, use their names rather than describing their impairments.
 - Talk to the person, not to their interpreter or support worker.
- Not make assumptions:
 - That disability is a bad thing. Many people are proud of their identity as a person with disability and their place within disability or deaf culture.
 - That someone with disability needs your help just because they have an impairment. But don't assume they don't either. Just ask.
- Ask (the right) questions:
 - Never ask someone what their disability or impairment is. It's none of your business and doesn't tell you anything you need to know. Ask about their access requirements instead.
 - Ask everyone about their access requirements, not just people with obvious impairments. This means you'll be able to support people with hidden impairments and those who don't necessarily identify as people with disability.

- Be accessible:
 - Once you know everyone's access requirements, you can do everything you can to make things accessible. For example, make sure meetings are accessible for people who are hard of hearing, that everyone can get into the venues and can access the toilets.
 - Clear and simple communication helps everybody. Don't cover your mouth. Face people when you're talking to them. Use simple words.
 - Talk normally. Don't use childlike or patronising language. And don't shout (deaf people still can't hear you). If you can't understand someone, ask them to draw or write it down.
- Avoid leading the creative process:
 - Incite is a community-engaged arts organisation. We work in collaboration with people with disability and act as facilitators in disability-led processes to support them explore ideas and create new work.
 - Don't impose your own ideas and then try to get participants to fit into them. Avoid taking over. Work together to create something new.
 - Don't ever physically move a person with disability into the 'right' position.
- Set and respect appropriate boundaries:
 - Don't ever lean on someone's wheelchair. It's part of their personal space.
 - Don't feed or play with someone's assistance dog. When they've got their harness on, they're working.
 - Some people with disability can be very affectionate. You should be friendly and welcoming, but set your own boundaries and be clear when you want someone to stop.

Definitions

Incite Arts uses the term “people with disability”. This comes from the Social Model of Disability that says people are disabled by barriers (like the lack of physical access or people’s attitudes) and not their personal medical condition.

Language

People / person with disability

Wheelchair user

Blind / vision impaired person

Deaf / hard of hearing / Auslan user

Learning disability / difficulty

Mental health issue

Has / experiences rather than suffers from / afflicted with