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# About Arts Law

Arts Law is Australia’s only national community legal centre for the arts, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee.  We provide free or low cost specialised legal advice, education and resources to Australian artists and arts organisations across all art forms on a wide range of arts related legal and business matters, including: including contracts, copyright, business structures, defamation, insurance, employment and tax. Arts Law’s Artists in the Black program delivers targeted services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists nationally.

Arts Law’s Organisation Values

In delivering our vision, Arts Law is guided by the values of excellence, accessibility, empowerment of artists, integrity, collaboration and innovation.

Arts Law services include a telephone advice service, a document review service, a mediation service and a referral service. Arts Law also provides a limited number of face-to-face legal advice clinics nationally as well as an outreach service through its Artists in the Black program.

Arts Law undertakes advocacy on key legal and policy issues affecting the arts and is regularly called upon by the media to provide a voice for artists on a range of issues.

Arts Law’s legal staff research, prepare and present a program of seminars, workshops, lectures, webinars and forums to artists, creative communities, students, tertiary institutions, Indigenous, multicultural and disability organisations as well as government agencies on a broad range of topical issues concerning law and the arts.

Through itswebsite: artslaw.com.au Arts Law publishes information sheets, checklists, guides and sample agreements on a wide range of legal topics relevant to artists and creative communities working in all art forms around Australia. Artslaw publishes a range of texts and handbooks and a monthly newsletter, Art+Law, on current arts-related legal issues.

# Purpose of this Disability Action Plan (DAP)

Arts Law is committed to being as accessible, welcoming and inclusive as possible. Our goal is to identify and remove barriers that may prevent or impede anyone with disabilities from accessing Arts Law’s services or from otherwise engaging with Arts Law in a way that a person without a disability may.

Arts Law will consider ways in which people with disability engage with Arts Law. This includes staff, volunteers (pro bono legal practitioners located in all Australian States and Territories and daytime volunteers, including law and other students, law graduates and qualified lawyers), service users (including artists and arts organisations) and board members.

We will use our Disability Action Plan to:

* articulate existing measures we have implemented to minimise barriers that could impede or prevent people with disabilities engaging with our organisation.
* Set goals and the strategies for achieving them for improvement in our accessibility.
* Measure our progress against KPIs contained in our Goals, along with surveys of clients and staff and others to measure our accessibility.

# Guiding principles

We rely on the definition of a disability contained in the United Nation’s 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

Disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments, conditions or illnesses and the environmental & attitudinal barriers they face. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent, temporary, intermittent or imputed and include those that are physical, sensory, psychosocial, neurological, medical or intellectual.

Arts Law is committed to the following principles: [[1]](#footnote-1)

* Integrating diversity and equality in all our activities
* Ensuring accessibility is part of business as usual
* Working in partnership with disability arts organisations and artists to improve access across the arts sector
* Increasing opportunities for artists and art workers with a disability
* Raising the profile of artists with a disability in Australia

Arts Law acknowledges that different disabilities present different environmental & attitudinal barriers.

Arts Law respects that it is a personal choice whether or not to identify as a person with a disability, and also to whom, when and how a person may choose to disclose this information. Arts Law aspires to have an organisational culture and environment where people with a disability feel comfortable they will not be treated less favourably if they choose to disclose this information.

# Goals

1. **Accessibility**

Arts Law is committed to addressing issues of disability access in all of its services, ensuring we comply with industry standards on accessibility.

1. **Organisational involvement**

Arts Law is committed to being an inclusive organisation that welcomes and values the contribution of a diverse range of people including those with disabilities. All Board members, staff and volunteers are made aware of our firm commitment to a policy of inclusion as contained in our Disability Action Plan and are encouraged to identify and consider actions that can be taken to minimise barriers to access.

1. **Leadership**

Arts Law is a leader in the arts community across Australia and is committed to raising the profile of disability arts and promoting awareness of disability barriers and their removal in Australia.

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| **GOAL 1: Accessibility**  Arts Law is committed to addressing issues of disability access for all of its services. | | | |
| **Strategy** | **KPI** | **Timeframe** | **Responsibility** |
| Internal Consultation to identify existing/possible barriers to Arts Law services | Develop survey for staff & volunteers to complete | Completed  September 2018 | GM |
| External Consultation to identify existing/possible barriers to Arts Law services | Consult with accessible arts organisations to assist with consultation of artists with disability | First half of 2019 | GM |
| Question re accessibility in survey of clients who have received legal advice or attended legal clinics. | 30/6/18 | GM |
| Review Arts Laws accessibility to services and identify areas for improvement | Access to Services report prepared | Second half of 2019 | CEO, GM |
| Improve disability access to legal advice & education | Add information to legal query form & Charter of Service re: disability access | June 2018 | CEO, GM, SS, Comms |
| Improve disability access to legal advice & education | Training for all staff on needs of people with disabilities | First Half 2019 | SS |
| embed WCAG 2.0 compliance into publishing procedures | Both Arts Law websites and content published on them meet WCAG 2.0 guidelines | Current. Ongoing. | Comms |
| Improve physical access to face to face education & advice | Where possible use accessible venues & publish access information so it is readily available to potential participants | Now | Comms |
| Implement captioning and subtitling as a standard process for new audio-visual material. | All new audio visual resources captioned and subtitled | Now | Comms |
| Improve access for people with a hearing disability | Arts Law will provide services in formats accessible to those with a hearing disability – i.e. telephone relay or in writing. | Now | GM, Lawyers. |

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| **GOAL 2: Organisational Involvement**  Arts Law is committed to being an inclusive organisation that welcomes and values the contribution of a diverse range of people including those with a disability. | | | |
| **Strategy/Action** | **KPI** | **Timeframe** | **Responsibility** |
| Internal Consultation to identify existing/possible barriers to engagement with Arts Law | Develop survey for staff, board & volunteers to complete | Completed September 2018. | GM |
| External Consultation to identify existing/possible barriers to engagement with Arts Law | Consult with Arts Access Australia, Accessible Arts and other state based accessible arts orgs to assist in consultation with artists with a disability | First half of 2019. | GM |
| Ensure all staff are informed of arts and disability issues and access initiatives | Initial training is delivered to all staff and as part induction to teach new and existing staff about practical access services such as the National Relay Service | First half of 2019. | GM SS |
| Distribute and facilitate implementation of the DAP | Training on DAP for all staff. | First half of 2019 | SS GM Comms |
| Improving Access to the built environment | Develop a checklist for consideration when viewing new premises (Arts Law moving in 2020) | Before move and as part of Accessible Arts review. | GM |
| Collect data on disability | Question added to legal advice intake form | 30/6/18 | GM Comms |
| Include people with disability as target area in the matrix for selection of board members | On agenda for Board meeting |  | CEO |
| Ensure all advertising for employment includes a statement identifying Arts Law as an equal opportunity employer. | Review EEO policy (5.8) & put on website. | First half of 2019 | CEO GM |

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| **GOAL 3: LEADERSHIP**  Arts Law is a leader in the arts community and is committed to raising the profile of artists with a disability and promoting awareness and removal of disability barriers in Australia. | | | |
| **Strategy** | **KPI** | **Timeframe** | **Responsibility** |
| Internal Consultation to involve staff, board & internal volunteers in review and further development of DAP | Survey designed and run | September 2018 | GM |
| External Consultation to evaluate needs & establish priorities | Meet with key disability organisations – and get Accessible Arts to review Arts Law’s DAP and accessibility. | First Half 2019 | GM or delegate |
| Investigate training currently offered by Arts Access & CLCs re disability access | Consider gaps in education offered and what Arts Law can provide | First Half 2019 | SS |
| Consider including accessibility issues as a component of best practice advice | Review advice services and where this would be relevant. | First Half 2019 | Senior Solicitor |
| Review current contract templates to include disability access where appropriate | Amend/ add relevant clauses to existing templates where necessary. | First half | SS CEO |
| Raise awareness of importance of removing barriers to access for print disabled artists and be a model organisation in terms of disability access in Australia. | Publish our Disability Action Plan and register with Human Rights Commission | First Half of 2019 | GM |
| Review and report on DAP in annual report |

# Evaluation

Arts Law will consult with disability organisations such as Arts Access, the Disability section of the Australia Council for the Arts and the Human Rights Commission, to set appropriate evaluation measures.

Evaluation of Arts Law’s success in minimising any barriers to access for people with a disability in the provision of its services and running of its operations will be undertaken regularly relying on a variety of methods including:

* Benchmarking against agreed industry/ recognised standards (such as web accessibility standards published by Vision Australia.)
* Surveys of staff, Board, artists/ clients, and stakeholders to provide feedback on accessibility and to identify barriers for disabled people in engaging with Arts Law – through whatever means (In person, online, by phone in written materials.)

Evaluation is an ongoing process. Surveys of clients who have received advice or attended a legal clinic will include questions on accessibility and provide Arts Law with continuous feedback. As an organisation, Arts Law will review measures as we become aware of accessibility issues, including methods for further breaking down any barriers. We will undergo a three yearly review of our DAP to ensure we are providing the most accessible service we can, taking into accounts improvements in technology and standards that will assist us to make our services as inclusive as possible.

1. We acknowledge the Australia Council Disability Action Plan 2017- 2019 as a reference for Arts Law’s DAP guiding principles. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)