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Sydney Opera House

Access Strategic Plan

2013 - 2015

Striving to make the building, site and experiences accessible to everyone.



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Message from the Chief Executive Officer

I am delighted to present Sydney Opera House's Access Strategic Plan 2013 – 2015.

The Plan outlines our past progress and future strategy towards improving access for people with disabilities.

The Plan is aligned to the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) with a focus on giving all customers access to our facilities, performances and experiences. It is also about providing leadership in the area of accessibility and the arts as well as creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities. We will measure our success through increases in the percentage of people accessing assisted performances, accessible venue seating and employment opportunities as well as through feedback that is received from disability organisations and the public.

At a time when the Australian population is ageing, and the number of people living with a disability is steadily increasing, accessibility is an important organisational asset used to attract and retain audiences, enhance reputation, minimise risk and ensure the building's long-term sustainability.

Several disability organisations continue to support our efforts to improve accessibility. I would like to thank these groups for providing us with a greater understanding of the access challenges faced by people with disabilities in accessing the arts.

Under the new Plan our access initiatives continue to evolve in scope. From the installation of our first public lift to the scheduling of our first autism-friendly performance, we strive to create new opportunities for people with disabilities to fully and equally participate in the life of Sydney Opera House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Herron', with a long, flowing underline.

Louise Herron
Chief Executive Officer

August 2012



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Introduction.

Who We are.

Sydney Opera House is one of the busiest performing arts centres in the world, providing over 1,800 performances and visited by an estimated 8.2 million people a year. Sydney Opera House is State, National and World Heritage listed.

We have seven primary venues: the Concert Hall, Opera Theatre, Drama Theatre, Playhouse, The Studio, Forecourt and Utzon Room.

As a performing arts centre Sydney Opera House promotes and supports many performing arts companies, including the four key resident companies: Opera Australia, Sydney Symphony, Sydney Theatre Company and The Australian Ballet as well other many other important Australian companies and artists.

Sydney Opera House's own programming Sydney Opera House Presents offers an eclectic mix of over 800 performances a year ranging from artistic and cultural activities through to educational and experimental programs for all ages.

Customer Profile.

Sydney Opera House has three principal groups of customers: the public; performing arts presenters and business partners; and staff members.

Sydney Opera House has over 760 employees (478 full time equivalent) spread over three sites. Of these, 20 employees have identified as having a disability and three required adjustments at work in the past year.

Goals.

The Access Strategic Plan has been developed with a focus on Sydney Opera House's strategic goals:

1: Artistic Excellence

Produce and present imaginative and engaging performing arts events from Australia and around the world.

2: Community Engagement and Access

Sydney Opera House belongs to everyone and all communities have access to experiences.

3: A Vibrant and Sustainable Site

Intensifying customer engagement and ensuring progress works in harmony with heritage values.

4: Earning Our Way

Remain relevant, contemporary and leverage our position as a critical tourism and cultural asset.

2 The vision.



Our Accessibility Vision.

Sydney Opera House is committed to ensuring it is recognised as a leader and innovator in providing barrier free access, making the building, site and experiences accessible to all people.

Guiding Accessibility Principles.

Sydney Opera House is committed to the following guiding accessibility principles:

- Access solutions promote the principles of equity and social inclusion while reinforcing positive community attitudes about people with disabilities;**
- Access issues are integrated early in the planning stage of new initiatives;**
- Attempts will be made to develop access solutions that achieve integrated and independent access;**
- Initiatives will comply with relevant disability access standards and legislation;**
- Access audits to determine access requirements will be undertaken for all areas and key initiatives;**
- Consultation with people with disabilities will be undertaken for key initiatives;**
- The latest access technologies will be considered for providing flexible and multi-sensory access solutions (both interpretive and physical); and**
- Access solutions are in synergy with the heritage values of Sydney Opera House.**



3 Data profile.

What is Disability?

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) defines disability as... 'any impairment, abnormality, or loss of function, of any part of the body or mind'. It includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning disability
- Physical disfigurement or
- Immunological - the presence of organisms causing disease in the body.

Current trends in the prevalence of disability

Over 4 million Australians have a disability. That is 18.5% of the population.

General

- The Department of Health and Ageing (2009) report that the numbers of people with disabilities is projected to increase by 1.9 million (41%) from 2009 to 2027. General population growth in that same period is projected at 23%
- Currently, only half of the 2.2 million Australians of working age with a disability are employed, compared to nearly 80% of Australians of working age without a disability

Intellectual

- Over 700,000 Australians have an intellectual or developmental disability

Sensory

- Around 300,000 Australians have substantial vision impairment, with around 20,000 who are totally blind
- The overall incidence of blindness and vision impairment for Australians is growing from the current number of 292,700 to 421,600 people in the next 15 years
- Deafness has been defined as the second biggest health issue facing Australia today, with an estimated 1 in 6 Australians affected by hearing loss. There are approximately 30,000

deaf Auslan users with total hearing loss. By 2050, it's projected to be 1 in every 4 Australians who will have hearing loss

Psychiatric

- More than 90,000 people have a mental health disorder. Mental health problems and mental illness are among the greatest causes of disability, diminished quality of life, and reduced productivity

(Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2009; Deloitte Access Economics)

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**Policy
context.**

“Your support furthered the interest of students in theatre and drama.”

Teacher, St Edmund’s School for Student with Vision Impairment and Other Special Needs



Social Policy Objectives.

The new Access Strategic Plan complies with the following legislation, codes and social justice commitments:

- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992;
- The NSW Disability Service Act 1993;
- Disability (Access to Premises –Buildings) Standards and Australian Standards for Design of Access and Mobility 1428.1-4;
- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG);
- By removing barriers to access and participation for people with disabilities, the Access Strategic Plan contributes to the key social objectives set out in the NSW State Plan: A New Direction for NSW for People with Disabilities;
- Guidelines for Disability Action Planning by NSW Government Agencies; and
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Australia ratified the Convention on 18 July 2008) Article 30 - Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport.



Audio-described performance of Man Coverts Bird and pre-show sensory session, Studio 2012

A black and white photograph of an open public lift. The lift's interior is dark, with metallic walls and a floor. The lift doors are open, revealing a brightly lit hallway with a tiled floor, a white door, and a white wall with a poster. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

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**Past
achievements.**

First accessible public
lift opens in 2009



Accessibility Development Path.

Sydney Opera House began addressing disability access in 2006. The first Access Strategic Plan 2006-2009 focused on getting people with disabilities into and around the building via large scale building improvements, as well as introducing a range of patron access accommodations and amenities. As a result, for the first time patrons could enjoy mainstream independent access to most areas of the site including all Western Theatre venues.

The second three year Plan 2009-12 focused on making the experiences inside the building more accessible through programming inclusive and assisted performances. By offering touch tours, audio-description, captioning and sign-language interpreted performances patrons with disabilities, including younger audiences, could join their peers without disabilities and participate in exciting performance experiences.

This three year Plan builds on the achievements of the previous plans. It aims to further embed employment, performance and artistic opportunities for people with disabilities; promote an inclusive Sydney Opera House identity and plan for the next phase of accessible building upgrades.



**“An excellent experience...
different because it was hands
on instead of just looking.”**

Work Experience Student, Balmain Campus
Sydney Secondary College

Highlights of the last Access Strategic Plan (2009-2012).

A. Accessibility Ambassador

- SOH inaugural Accessibility Ambassador Accessibility Ambassador appointed - Louise Sauvage OAM

B. Building Upgrades

- First public lift and escalators installed (Western Foyers & Accessibility Project)
- New accessible Studio lift installed
- Range of accessible/ companion seating created in Western Theatres
- Four new accessible unisex toilet facilities installed
- New accessible Information Desk extension on Box Office Level created
- Hearing loop system installed in main Box Office counters
- An extra bank of seating installed in the shuttle bus waiting area for frail aged patrons

C. Patron Access

- Acceptance of the NSW Companion Card incorporated into presenter contract requirements
- New visitor receiver units for The Essential Tour were purchased compatible for visitors with hearing impairments
- 10 additional courtesy wheelchairs were purchased to loan to patrons while visiting the site
- Customer accessibility information web page created - includes access brochure and diary of events page
- A five minute captioned web clip on customer accessibility information narrated by Accessibility Ambassador Louise Sauvage OAM launched on the website
- Captioned web clip showcasing Sydney Opera House's latest inclusive performances and building upgrades featured on the Sydney Opera House website as well as Arts NSW website homepage and presented at the meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Cultural Ministers

D. Accessible Experiences

- Auslan tours of the House available bi-monthly
- SOH Presents House Ed launched its inclusive programming schedule 2012 for young audiences with disabilities – includes Auslan interpreted and audio-described performances as well as pre-show sensory touch tours of the stage and two autism-friendly performances
- Regular audio-description of the Opera in collaboration with Vision Australia and Opera Australia commenced
- Schedule of pre-performance Opera talks describing the set, costumes and other visual elements provided regularly to Vision Australia clients with complementary balcony box (poor sightline) seats
- 20 hours of Talks and Ideas video content on PLAY was closed captioned

E. Staff Training and Education

- Web accessibility review of sydneyoperahouse.com was undertaken and identified non-compliant areas addressed (excluding PLAY portal)
- SOH supported Circumspecto - Cerebral Palsy Alliance's performance in the Studio which included seven performers with cerebral palsy
- Regular Accessibility Awareness sessions provided as part of the Welcome Induction program for all new staff members
- Further targeted access training provided regularly and throughout the year to Security, Front of House and Visitor Services staff
- Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace training session was piloted with select managers across the organisation (facilitated by the Australian Network on Disability)
- Tailored accessibility session included in pilot Managers Induction Training

- The following additional disability awareness sessions were provided to all staff:
 - Building Disability Confidence in the Workplace (delivered by The Australian Network on Disability)
 - Disability Awareness: Communication and Etiquette (delivered by Accessible Arts)
 - Deaf Awareness Session (delivered by Deaf Society of NSW)
 - Blind and Vision Awareness Session (delivered by Vision Australia)



F. Industry Leadership

SOH supported and hosted the following industry information sessions:

- Festival Forums - access to major events and arts festivals (in collaboration with Accessible Arts and City of Sydney Council)
- Accessible Music Pathways Forum (in collaboration with Accessible Arts)
- Industry Companion Card Information session (in collaboration with National Disability Services)
- Launch of the Walk On program (Spinal Cord Injuries Awareness Week 2009)

- Audio Description Seminar provided by renowned international expert Joel Snyder, visiting from the U.S.A (in collaboration with Vision Australia)

In addition, Sydney Opera House's Accessibility Manager chaired the NSW Arts and Disability Partnership funding Strand 1 (a) assessment panel and provided industry briefings on accessibility and the arts to:

- Communities NSW
- Cultural Institutions CEO Forum
- Sydney Arts Management Advisory Group, Australia Council
- School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism, Faculty of Business UTS

G. Employment and Work Experience Opportunities


- Four week High School Work Experience placement piloted for students with intellectual disabilities
- A Paralympian was employed as a ticketing service representative as part of Sydney Opera House's participation in the Paralympic Workplace Diversity Program
- A young person with Cerebral Palsy became a representative on the Sydney Opera House Youth Advisory Committee to represent the needs of young people with disabilities



Post-show sensory session
Lah Lah's Big Band, 2011
Image: Caroline McCredie

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**Consultation
process.**



Key internal and external stakeholder consultation was conducted as part of the development of the Access Strategic Plan. The consultation identified remaining access barriers and explored current trends and best practice in the area of accessibility.

We would like to sincerely thank the following representatives for their participation in the consultation process as well as their ongoing support to improve access at Sydney Opera House.

We would like to sincerely thank

- Louise Sauvage OAM, Sydney Opera House Accessibility Ambassador**
- Accessible Arts**
- Deaf Society of NSW**
- Self Help for the Hard of Hearing (SHHH)**
- Spinal Cord Injury Australia (SCIA)**
- Vision Australia**
- Cerebral Palsy Alliance**
- 360HR**
- Media Access Australia**
- Australian Network on Disability**
- Members of the public with an interest in accessibility issues who volunteered their time to provide feedback and ideas**

Sydney Opera House will continue to build strong relationships and work collaboratively with our partners in the disability sector throughout the life of this Plan.

7 Monitor and review.

“Having Celrebral Palsy can make people invisible... Thank you Sydney Opera House for what you have achieved for us.”

**Director, Can You See Me Co
Circumspecto**



The Plan's implementation will be monitored and supported by the dedicated Accessibility Manager. Achievements under the Plan will be celebrated at the annual Access Awards ceremony (for staff and external partners) presided over by the Chief Executive Officer and Accessibility Ambassador. Achievements will also be reported periodically in the publications of disability access organisations.

The Sydney Opera House Trust and the Chief Executive Officer of Sydney Opera House will ensure that progress towards the outcomes of the Plan are reviewed and reported on via the regular CEO report to the Sydney Opera House Trust.

Feedback from customers, Sydney Opera House staff and access organisations will also be used to inform the success of the Plan's outcomes.

The Plan will be available on sydneyoperahouse.com, including an audio file version. Hard copies of the Plan, including copies in alternate formats (braille, large print and easy English) can be requested from Jenny Spinak: Accessibility Manager, Sydney Opera House, GPO Box 4274, Sydney NSW Australia 2001.

Contact

Telephone: 61 2 92507175

Facsimile: 61 2 92507135

Email: jspinak@sydneyoperahouse.com



A. Measurement of Progress

Performance indicators will include:

- Increase in the % of people accessing assisted performances, accessible venue seating and other access services - where baseline measurements and monitoring are available; and
- Positive feedback from disability organisations and customer satisfaction surveys regarding the quality of access at Sydney Opera House

Further development of performance indicators will occur over the life of the plan.

The Plan will be registered with the Australian Disability Rights Commission and submitted to the Department of Ageing, Disability and Homecare and achievements under the Plan will also be published in Sydney Opera House's Annual Report.

8 Access strategic plan.



Audience members attending
Inclusive performances

Overall Access Strategic Plan Goal.

To provide equal access and increase participation of people with disabilities in Sydney Opera House, as performers, employees and members of the public.

Outcome areas.

This Plan has prioritised strategies that are realistic and achievable in the current resource and operating environments, while producing the greatest benefits in the everyday experience of patrons and staff with disabilities.

We are focusing our actions on 5 key strategy areas:

- 1. Continue to improve operational processes across the site to provide a ‘seamless’ accessibility experience that blends into customer service and event operations;**
- 2. Promote awareness of Sydney Opera House’s access services and initiatives, ticketing policies and inclusive performances to the wider community to increase audience visitation, utilisation of access services and awareness of Sydney Opera House’s commitment to accessibility;**
- 3. Improve access to experiences including access to performances, online content, building and facilities through capacity building and best practice planning activities;**
- 4. Develop workplace opportunities for supporting and employing people with disabilities; and**
- 5. Demonstrate leadership in accessibility by brokering new partnerships and facilitating new learning experiences across the arts industry and disability sector.**

The initiatives contained in the Plan will deliver benefits for all customers as well as demonstrate to the community that improving access is an ongoing organisational commitment.

Access Strategic Plan 2012-15

Customers

Audience, Patrons

Key Area 1: Operations

- Increase scope of accessible customer service training
- Accessibility operations working group
- Events accessibility checklist for event organisers

Key Area 2: Awareness

- Raise awareness of Sydney Opera House access programs and services
- National Access Awards Recognition.
- Access theatre brochure available in accessible formats

Key Area 3: Experiences

- Investigate new technology that could improve accessibility services
- Website complies with WCAG 2.0 requirements
- Audio-description capacity across all venues/performances
- Annual programme of inclusive House:Ed performances
- Expanding captioning - online, live performance and digital excursion content
- Concept designs - accessible building upgrades stage two

Staff

Key Area 4: Workplace

- Employment and internship opportunities for people with disabilities
- Mental health and wellbeing in the workplace training
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy implementation
- Links to disability employment service providers

Wider Community

Key Area 5: Leadership

- Sydney Opera House a state-wide resource on arts and disability
- Showcase work of emerging artists with disabilities
- Accessibility Internship for students attending arts administration and venue management related courses



Focus Area 1.

Continue to improve operational processes across the site to provide a ‘seamless’ accessibility experience that blends into customer service and event operations.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
<p>Facilitate tailored access awareness training sessions for the following groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New staff – Ticketing Services – Visitor Services – Security – Front of House 	<p>Accessibility Manager, Learning and Development and relevant unit managers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All customer-facing staff aware of access services, policies and facilities and can communicate effectively to assist customers with access requirements</p>
<p>Provide ongoing updated access service information briefings at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Theatre Manager briefings – Box Office sellers briefings – Host Team meetings – Pass on customer feedback and provide short access updates through internal communications 	<p>Accessibility Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All customer-facing staff are aware of up to date access services, facilities and sensitivities around upcoming inclusive performances</p>
<p>Include tailored accessible customer service awareness sessions in the Service Plus Program for customer facing contractors on site (Opera Kitchen, Theatre Bars, Green Room Dining, SOH Shop). Invite nominated ‘access champions’ from each contractor area to attend the awareness session. Schedule accessibility awareness briefing sessions for Security (ACG) and Tourism (Magic Memories) contractors</p>	<p>Accessibility Manager, Venue Partners & Safety, Tourism, Security, Learning and Development</p>	<p>Ongoing as per training schedule</p>	<p>All customer-facing resident contractors are skilled and confident in providing standardised high levels of accessible customer service</p>

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
Organise for a professional mental health association to provide briefing sessions to Front of House, Box Office and Ticketing staff on assisting customers with mental health issues including practical tips for responding to challenging customer situations (due to the effects of mental health issues)	Accessibility Manager, Learning & Development	Year 1	Front line staff are skilled in dealing with difficult customer situations and sensitive to mental health issues
Schedule awareness sessions for Theatre Manager, Front of House and House:Ed staff on accessibility issues for students and young audiences with disabilities, in preparation for schedule of inclusive House:Ed performances. Include awareness of access needs of audiences with Autism Spectrum Disorders as well as intellectual and sensory disabilities	Accessibility Manager, Patron Services, Education and Young People	Year 1	Staff aware of access challenges for young audience members with disabilities and their families and can provide a seamless and welcoming visiting experience
Create an in-house accessibility operations working group to monitor the delivery of access accommodations and services including: accessible seating arrangements, hold and release seating policy implementation, online bookings, shuttle bus operations, accessible concourse parking and staff assisted access to ensure they are meeting the needs of patrons with disabilities	Accessibility Manager, Head of Patron Services, Front of House Operations Manager, Head of Ticketing Services. Counterparts at key resident companies will also be invited to attend	Year 1 and then ongoing (to convene three times per year)	Patrons and visitors experience a seamless visiting experience
Continue to update the organisations access policies to reflect any changes in the DDA legislation (i.e. identification requirements for assistance animals etc)	Accessibility Manager	Ongoing	Access policies updated, published on staff intranet and communicated to all relevant staff
Develop an events accessibility checklist with key disability access considerations for use in the planning of special events and festivals	Accessibility Manager	Year 1	Accessibility checklist developed and disseminated to event organisers and published on the staff intranet

Focus Area 2.

Promote awareness of Sydney Opera House’s access services and initiatives, ticketing policies and inclusive performances to the wider community to increase audience visitation, utilisation of access services and awareness of Sydney Opera House’s commitment to accessibility.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
Develop a plan to promote Sydney Opera House’s accessibility events and services to people with disabilities and the wider community; including communications around the accessibility program, targeting events to various disability audiences and proposing appropriate editorial stories regarding access initiatives at Sydney Opera House	Accessibility Manager	Year 1	Increased public awareness of Sydney Opera House’s commitment to people with disabilities as well as available accessible services, tours, facilities and performances leading to increased audiences of people with disabilities (including schools, community groups and individuals)
Enter Sydney Opera House’s accessibility program initiatives into the Australian Business Arts Foundation’s new Arts Access Award as well as the National Disability Award’s ‘Excellence in Improving Social Participation Award’	Accessibility Manager	Year 2	Increase national recognition of Sydney Opera House’s commitment and innovation in the area of accessibility
Update accessibility information and initiatives in the online Access Calendar and Theatre Access Brochure and make available in alternative formats. Distribute updates to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presenters – Disability organisation’s networks and newsletters – Front of House 	Accessibility Manager	Ongoing	Improved awareness of accessible services, facilities and performances



Auslan Interpreter, Man Covers
Bird performance, 2012

Focus Area 3.

Improve access to Sydney Opera House experiences including access to performances, online content, building and facilities through capacity building and best practice planning activities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
<p>Conduct a web accessibility review of sydneyoperahouse.com against new Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 requirements, including PLAY portal and main site</p>	<p>Information Systems, Accessibility Manager</p>	<p>Year 1</p>	<p>Website conforms to at the minimum WCAG 2.0 priority checkpoints</p>
<p><i>All NSW State Government agencies are required to meet WCAG 2.0 Level A compliance by 31 December 2012 and Level AA by 31 December 2014. To achieve this all digital content must be closed captioned by the former deadline and audio-described by the later deadline.</i></p> <p>Prepare plan and identify funds to have all existing Play video content captioned or archived off the platforms. Prepare work flow processes for captioning of all new video content as it is created going forward for December 2012 deadline. Initiate planning in 2013 for meeting December 2014 requirements. Request exemption for short lived video content and content Sydney Opera House embeds from third party sources</p>	<p>Information Systems, Accessibility Manager</p>	<p>Level A compliance by 31 December 2012 and Level AA by 31 December 2014</p>	<p>Compliance with government requirements achieved</p>
<p>Investigate latest and most effective technologies available for delivering live captioning technology in all venues, including seat fixed devices and personal handheld device options and develop a business case for purchasing identified equipment options</p>	<p>Accessibility Manager, Head of Sound & AV</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Options investigated (patrons with disabilities consulted) and business case completed for submission to the Executive for consideration</p>
<p>Develop a proposal for creating an in-house team of volunteer audio-describers to audio-describe selected live SOH Presents performances, select online digital content and touch tours for visitors who are blind and vision impaired</p>	<p>Accessibility Manager, Human Resources</p>	<p>Year 2</p>	<p>Proposal completed and submitted to the Executive for consideration</p>

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
Develop a business case for the purchase of in-house audio-description equipment for use in all venues	Accessibility Manager, Head of Sound & AV	Year 1	Options investigated and business case developed for Executive consideration
Provide introductory audio-description of select SOH Presents performances in the form of online text and audio file format for patrons who are blind or have low vision to access prior to a performance. The available online audio-descriptions would set the scene of the performance so that patrons have the option of attending performances on any occasion they choose and have background information on the performance's visual elements (including set and costumes)	Accessibility Manager	Year 2	Online descriptions are provided for relevant performances where live audio-description service is not offered
Complete concept designs to provide dignified equitable access to the main halls linking foyer spaces and Box Office Level for the Concert Hall and Opera Theatre including access to Bennelong restaurant, stage platforms and dressing rooms as well as designs for compliant accessible seating arrangements	Building Development & Maintenance Portfolio as part of the Strategic Building Plan Review	Year 1	Concept designs ready to become detail designs and construction if future funding becomes available
Continue to provide an inclusive House:Ed performance schedule including: annual autism-friendly performances; pre-show introductory workshops and touch tours; Auslan interpreted and audio-described performances. Develop social story resources for audiences with Autism Spectrum Disorders and facilitate 'Meet Your Seat' excursions	Accessibility Manager, Education and Young People Team	Ongoing	Program is scheduled and launched each year
Pilot the captioning of Sydney Opera House digital excursions for students who are deaf and hearing impaired	Accessibility Manager, SOH Education Specialist	Year 1	Sydney Opera House digital excursions are accessible for schools with students who are deaf or have hearing impairments

Focus Area 4.

Develop workplace opportunities for supporting and employing people with disabilities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
Identify areas across the organisation to take up final year university graduates with disabilities as part of the 'Stepping Into' internship program facilitated by the Australian Network on Disability	Human Resources, Accessibility Manager	Four week internship program offered in the July and February university semester breaks	Up to two new graduate placements provided each year
Offer Year 11 and 12 students with intellectual disabilities a 5 week work experience placement, consisting of two days per week, using the successful 2011 pilot work experience program model	People & Culture, Accessibility Manager	At least one placement offered per year	Placement offered to schools to apply. Provide exposure to the different areas of the Sydney Opera House as well as opportunities to develop social and job-related skills for students with intellectual disabilities
Send details of appropriate job vacancies to 360 HR recruitment to scope for potential Paralympic candidates to apply (as part of the Paralympic Workplace Diversity Program)	Human Resources, Accessibility Manager and appropriate hiring managers	Ongoing	Appropriate casual and part-time job vacancies provided to 360HR

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
Create a database of local Disability Employment Service Providers, including details of government incentives available to support the employment of people with disabilities	Accessibility Manager	Year 1	Database developed and Human Resources are aware of appropriate recruitment channels and services available for employing people with disabilities
Develop a Reasonable Adjustment Policy implementation plan to promote the policy across all areas of the organisation	Accessibility Manager, Human Resources, Corporate Development Officer	Year 1	All managers and staff are aware of their responsibilities as well as the procedures in place regarding reasonable adjustments in the workplace due to disability
Continue to roll out program of Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing awareness training to selected managers facilitated by Australian Network on Disability	Accessibility Manager, Learning and Development	Ongoing	Increase awareness and support around mental health issues in the workplace
Develop guidelines for presenting accessible internal documents and presentations - including use of fonts, font sizes, colour selections and colour contrasts to improve accessibility	Accessibility Manager	Year 1	Guidelines developed and communicated to staff to ensure internal documents presentations are accessible to staff with low vision, colour blindness and other sensory or learning disabilities

Focus Area 5.

Demonstrate leadership in accessibility by brokering new partnerships and facilitating learning experiences across the arts industry and disability sector.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Evaluation
<p>Host annual accessibility information sessions to raise awareness of international best practice for the arts industry. The sessions will be based on innovative programs from overseas (Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability, U.S.A.) International trends will be related back to the Australian context with local guest speakers</p>	<p>Accessibility Manager</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Sydney Opera House is acknowledged as playing a leadership role in facilitating access awareness across the arts industry</p>
<p>Investigate funding opportunities to enable Sydney Opera House to showcase the outcomes of the NSW Arts and Disability partnership program as part of International Day of People with Disabilities 2013. This includes screening films, art works and performances produced by people with disabilities under the partnership program</p>	<p>Accessibility Manager</p>	<p>Year 1: Funding opportunities investigated. Year 2: Implementation to coincide with International Day of People with Disabilities</p>	<p>Funding identified to enable Sydney Opera House to showcase the talents of emerging artists with disabilities and ensure the artistic contributions of people with disabilities are a valued and visible component of our culture</p>
<p>Provide a three month one day per week Accessibility Internship (non-paid) to final year students studying in the fields of Arts Administration, Events, Tourism, Venue and Facility management</p>	<p>Accessibility Manager</p>	<p>One placement offered per year</p>	<p>Accessibility Internship program offers support to the accessibility program while providing future venue and arts administrators' exposure and understanding of relevant accessibility planning issues and the importance of access and inclusion</p>



Post-show sensory session
Lah Lah's Big Band, 2011
Image: Caroline McCredie



Audio-described performance of
Man Covers Bird, Studio 2012

Implementation Timeline.

Year 1: 2013

- FOH Mental health briefing sessions. (Action 1.4)
- Accessible customer service awareness sessions for contractors. (Action 1.3)
- Awareness sessions for Theatre Manager, Front of House and House: Ed staff on accessibility issues for students and young audiences with disabilities. (Action 1.5)
- Events accessibility checklist. (Action 1.8)
- In-house accessibility operations working group. (Action 1.6)
- Web accessibility review of sydneyopera.com against WCAG 2.0. (Action 3.1)
- Business case for in-house audio-description equipment. (Action 3.5)
- Phase two - Accessible Building upgrade concept designs. (Action 3.7)
- Pilot captioning Sydney Opera House digital excursions for students who are deaf and hearing impaired. (Action 3.9)
- Disability Employment Services database. (Action 4.4)
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy implementation. (Action 4.5)

Year 2: 2014

- Promotion Plan for Sydney Opera House's inclusive performances and access services to people with disabilities. (Action 2.1)
- Enter Arts Access Award/ National Disability Award. (Action 2.2)
- Business case for live captioning technology options. (Action 3.3)
- In-house team of volunteer audio-describers proposal. (Action 3.4)
- Introductory audio-description recordings of select productions in the form of online text and audio files. (Action 3.6)
- Funding opportunities sought to enable Sydney Opera House to showcase the outcomes of the NSW Arts and Disability partnership program as part of International Day of People with Disabilities 2013. (Action 5.2)

Year 3: 2015

(& ongoing initiatives)

- Facilitate tailored access awareness training sessions for all new SOH recruits. (Action 1.1)
- Update access policies to reflect changes in the DDA legislation. (Action 1.7)
- Online access calendar and theatre access brochure updates available in alternative formats. (Action 2.3)
- Play video content captioning plan. (Action 3.2)
- Annual inclusive House Ed performance schedule. (Action 3.8)
- 'Stepping Into' internship program. (Action 4.1)
- Work experience placement for high school students with intellectual disabilities. (Action 4.2)
- Paralympic Workplace Diversity Program opportunities. (Action 4.3)
- Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing awareness sessions (Action 4.6)
- Annual accessibility information sessions. (Action 5.1)
- Accessibility Internship Program. (Action 5.3)

For more information visit

sydneyoperahouse.com/accessibility