

National Gallery of Victoria Disability Action Plan 2009-2011

26 March 2009

An introduction to NGV's Disability Action Plan 2009-2011

The mission of the National Gallery of Victoria is “**to illuminate life by collecting, conserving and presenting great art.**” The NGV is the custodian of the State Collection, owned by the people of Victoria, and we therefore welcome every Victorian and residents from other parts of Australia - and the world - to experience what the NGV has to offer.

The NGV values are access, excellence and integrity. The *Disability Action Plan 2009-2011* is an important document as it demonstrates how we value access for all, and gives us the necessary focus to ensure that we are being inclusive of artists, visitors, employees, volunteers and contractors with disabilities.

As the NGV's governing body, the Council of Trustees is committed to ensuring all members of the community have the opportunity to experience the NGV Collection, its exhibitions and facilities.

In support of our commitment to access for all, the Council of Trustees has approved this Disability Action Plan as a response to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Commonwealth) and the *Disability Act 2006* (Victoria).

This Disability Action Plan aims to contribute to the continuous improvement of NGV facilities and services within the context of strategic and operational plans.

The National Gallery of Victoria comprises two major public venues: **The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia** at Federation Square, the home of Australian art collection; and **NGV International** on St Kilda Road, which displays artworks from all over the world. The NGV presents a diverse range of visual arts exhibitions, programs and activities throughout the year. The NGV also offers visitors dining and venue hire facilities as well as the NGV Shop.

The Plan acknowledges there are access challenges inherent in NGV buildings, and outlines actions to address a wide range of opportunities to enhance access to NGV facilities and services.

The NGV is committed to continuous improvement. NGV senior management will review this Disability Action Plan, monitor actions and ensure that it remains relevant to community standards.

This will often involve consulting members of the community with disabilities and with arts and disability peak organisations in order to ensure that the Disability Action Plan retains its flexibility and responsiveness.

The NGV has registered this *Disability Action Plan 2009-2011* with the Australian Human Rights Commission, which may be viewed online at www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/action_plans/Register/register

Allan Myers
President, National Gallery of Victoria Council of Trustees

Background

Definition of Disability

“Disability” for the purposes of this Action Plan encompasses the same areas as the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA).

The term “disability” refers to any permanent or temporary condition, which affects a person’s bodily or mental function.

In 2003, 4 million people in Australia (20% of the population) had a disability, which restricted their everyday activities and had lasted, or was expected to last, for six months or more. There were 3.35 million people in Australia (17% of the population) aged 60 years and over. Of these, 51% had a disability.*

The DDA applies across Australia. Its purposes include the elimination, as far as possible, of discrimination against people with disabilities in a range of areas, including employment, education, access to premises, clubs and sport and the provision of goods, facilities and services.

The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate because of disabilities which people:

- Have now, or which previously existed but no longer exist
- May acquire in the future
- Are imputed to a person

The DDA also protects a person with a disability against discrimination when:

- They are accompanied by an assistant, interpreter or reader
- They are accompanied by an animal trained to alleviate the disability (eg guide dog)
- They use equipment or aids (eg hearing aids)

The DDA also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of a disability of their associates, such as relatives, partners, carers, or business, sporting or recreational associates.

The *Disability Act 2006* (Victoria) provides the framework for a whole-of-government approach to enable people with a disability to actively participate in community life.

Section 38 (1) of the Act specifies that a Disability Action Plan is prepared for the purposes of:

- (a) reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- (b) reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- (c) promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability; and
- (d) achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

*Cultural Participation by Persons with a Disability and Older Persons 2003, National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics, Australian Bureau of Statistics

About the Development of the NGV Disability Action Plan

This is the first time that the NGV has published a Disability Action Plan (DAP).

However the NGV has a long history of commitment to access to its collections and exhibitions for all. For example, NGV visitors enjoyed the Access Gallery from 1991 to 1999 in its St Kilda Road building and in 1999 a dedicated All Abilities program was launched, including services such as large-print guides and Auslan tours of the NGV Collection, in consultation with Arts Access and other peak organisations.

During 2009 the NGV's access program includes the following elements:

- Training workshops in Visual Describing/Audio Description conducted by Vision Australia for selected exhibitions;
- *Experiencing Arts*, a free program in 2009 for artists with a disability, has been developed in partnership with Arts Access;
- Regular free Auslan and Visual Describing gallery tours for major ticketed exhibitions;
- *Art and Memory*, free guided tours by NGV Voluntary Guides, are available by request for people with dementia;
- Education Schools programs are offered to primary and secondary school students of all abilities and integrated into all activities.

The DAP has been developed by the NGV's **Disability Action Plan Project Team**, which has been formed as a part of the **NGV's Access Committee** which includes NGV staff from many areas of the Gallery. The Project Team has sought advice from arts and disability peak organisations in developing this DAP.

The Disability Action Plan Project Team is chaired by the NGV's General Manager Marketing who is an Executive Officer of the National Gallery of Victoria.

The DAP Project Team has representation from the following NGV departments: Front of House, Assets & Facilities, Curatorial, Exhibition Management, Exhibition Design, Education and Public Programs, Registration, Human Resources, Marketing, Information Services.

Desired Outcomes of this Disability Action Plan

- Outcome 1: People with disabilities will have a range of access opportunities at the NGV.
- Outcome 2: Persons employed at the NGV will be knowledgeable about the access requirements of people with disabilities.
- Outcome 3: The NGV will provide inclusive employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Outcome 4: The NGV will actively promote the implementation of the DAP - through monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

Planning and Reporting

Further research will be undertaken and more information relating to access for people with disabilities will be issued by the Victorian Government, including Arts Victoria, over the period covered by this Disability Action Plan.

The NGV will revise its DAP in the light of these new findings and will re-register its Plan with the Australian Human Rights Commission accordingly.

Members of the DAP Project Team will communicate and consult with NGV colleagues from their own or related teams as well as with many NGV stakeholder groups and peak organisations in order to achieve the actions in the DAP that are relevant to their area of operation in the Gallery.

The NGV DAP will be reviewed by the DAP Project Team and the NGV's Strategic Leadership Team on a **quarterly basis** to ensure the timely completion of actions.

Progress on the actions outlined in this DAP will be **reported each year in the National Gallery of Victoria's Annual Report** which is available to view or download from the **NGV website** at www.ngv.vic.gov.au

Objective 1 – To reduce barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities

Action 1 – Create a register of and consult with peak organisations including those which have expertise in the visual arts in order to advise the NGV.

Responsibility: Marketing, Front of House, Education & Programs teams

Timeline: Register completed by August 2009

Evaluation: Register will have been created and organisations consulted on an ongoing basis

Action 2 – Flag visitors' access-related comments via the NGV's Visitor Comments Register and report results regularly to inform on the progress of the NGV's DAP.

Responsibility: Front of House team

Timeline: Quarterly report to DAP Project Team from May 2009 meeting

Evaluation: Register set up to flag access-related comments and results will have been reported

Action 3 – Review the NGV offering for visitors with a disability including feedback from NGV staff and key stakeholder groups and develop recommendations for future delivery of these services to 2011.

Responsibility: Front of House, Education & Programs teams

Timeline: Review including recommendations completed by August 2010

Evaluation: Review will have been completed

Action 4 – Review how members of the community with a disability communicate with the NGV to understand what barriers exist and make recommendations for change.

Responsibility: Front of House, Education & Programs teams, supported by DAP Project Team

Timeline: Review including recommendations to be made by February 2010

Evaluation: NGV Visitor Comments Register, Annual Visitor Access Survey, Program evaluations

Action 5 – Review the NGV website and develop an improvement plan to maximise accessibility to and information for people with disabilities.

Responsibility: Multimedia and Marketing teams

Timeline: Dovetails the website redevelopment project, review to be completed by August 2010

Evaluation: Visitor Comments Register, Annual Visitor Access Survey, NGV website feedback

Action 6 – Undertake an all-hours NGV Access Audit for public and non-public areas.

Responsibility: Led by the Asset & Facilities team and guided by DAP Project Team

Timeline: Audit completed May 2009. Report completed August 2009. Cycle repeated May 2011

Evaluation: Audits will have been completed on time

Action 7 – Prepare an Implementation Plan, including timelines and how agreed changes will be funded, based on the Access Audit and feedback from staff and visitors.

Responsibility: DAP Project Team guided by Strategic Leadership Team

Timeline: Plan to be completed by November 2009, report on progress at quarterly DAP meetings

Evaluation: Progress will have been made towards achieving the four outcomes of this DAP

Objective 2 – To reduce barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment

The following actions will be piloted through the Front of House function before rolling out to apply to all NGV staff:

Action 1 – Identify the physical requirements to perform roles at the NGV and include these requirements on Role Statements.

Responsibility: HR team

Timeline: May 2009

Evaluation: Amendments will have been made to Role Statements after appropriate consultation

Action 2 – Assess the NGV's recruitment process in attracting candidates with a disability.

Responsibility: HR team

Timeline: May 2009

Evaluation: NGV recruitment process will have been signed off by senior management after appropriate consultation

Action 3 – Include an access statement about Equal Opportunity at the NGV in employment advertising, and make Role Statements available in accessible formats.

Responsibility: HR team

Timeline: May 2009

Evaluation: All employment advertisements placed will include the access statement

Action 4 – Incorporate Disability Awareness Training into existing Respect for Others Training (Equal Opportunity) for NGV staff.

Responsibility: HR team

Timeline: November 2009

Evaluation: Consultation with the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission will have taken place and revised training will be underway

Action 5 – Establish partnerships with organisations such as Disability Works Australia and conduct audits of work areas at the NGV.

Responsibility: HR team

Timeline: May 2009

Evaluation: Discussions will have taken place between the NGV and DWA

Action 6 – Align DAP with Role Statements and NGV staff Performance Development Plans.

Responsibility: Led by HR team through Senior Management Team

Timeline: August 2009

Evaluation: DAP initiatives will appear in individual employees' Performance Development Plans

Objective 3 – To promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability

Action 1 – Conduct an annual Visitor Access Survey program at both galleries to monitor how all visitors, including those with disabilities, access NGV facilities.

Responsibility: Marketing team

Timeline: Surveys to be conducted from May 2009 at both galleries covering periods of varying visitor numbers

Evaluation: Benchmarks will be set and access rating scores will be expected to improve over time

Action 2 – Create and maintain a database of visual and performing arts practitioners and presenters with disabilities to incorporate into NGV programs and events

Responsibility: Education & Programs teams

Timeline: Database to be developed by August 2009

Evaluation: The database will have been drawn upon in developing programs and events

Action 3 – Work with Arts Victoria and major Victorian arts agencies to include visitor access information for the arts on the Arts Victoria website.

Responsibility: Marketing and Media teams

Timeline: November 2009

Evaluation: Disability access will be an agenda item at Marketing and Communication meetings chaired by Arts Victoria and attended by NGV representatives

Action 4 – Send regular information about NGV access and activities to organisations that represent people with a disability.

Responsibility: Marketing and Media teams

Timeline: From May 2009

Evaluation: A regular process for the distribution of information will be in place

Action 5 – Review information about NGV access in appropriate formats in the *What's On* publication, the NGV intranet and website and *Gallery Magazine* and make recommendations for future printed and multimedia collateral.

Responsibility: Marketing, Education & Programs teams

Timeline: Review including recommendations completed by Feb 2010 for inclusion into materials by July 2010

Evaluation: Review will have been completed. Appropriate access information will be appearing in NGV collateral

Action 6 – Assess the inclusion of a disability access statement in NGV supplier agreements and tender documents.

Responsibility: Contracts and Tenders Manager, through Assets & Facilities team

Timeline: August 2009

Evaluation: Statement will have been added to document templates and new agreements

Objective 4 – To achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability

Action 1 – Reflect the NGV’s commitment to access for all in policies and guidelines including the NGV Respect for Others Policy, the NGV Recruitment and Selection Toolkit and the NGV Welcome and Induction Kit.

Responsibility: HR team

Timeline: August 2009

Evaluation: Policies and procedures will have been amended and signed off by senior management

Action 2 – Attend Disability Law information sessions.

Responsibility: DAP Project Team

Timeline: Attend as available

Evaluation: Attendance will have been reported and learnings shared at quarterly DAP meetings

Action 3 – Continue to attend DAP training and information sessions offered by the Office for Disability and Arts Victoria.

Responsibility: DAP Project Team

Timeline: Attend as available

Evaluation: Attendance will have been reported and learnings shared at quarterly DAP meetings

Action 4 – Release quarterly updates to all NGV staff, volunteers and stakeholder groups including contract suppliers, in order to report on DAP progress.

Responsibility: DAP Project Team/Director

Timeline: Quarterly report from May 2009 via NGV intranet and noticeboards at NGV buildings

Evaluation: Reports will have been issued

Action 5 – Raise awareness amongst NGV staff by inviting a peak arts and disability organisation to prepare a presentation for an annual All Staff Meeting that reflects on experiences of those with a disability in accessing the arts.

Responsibility: DAP Project Team/Director

Timeline: November 2009 and November 2010

Evaluation: Staff will have reported feedback at SMT and quarterly DAP meetings

Action 6 – Incorporate Disability Awareness Training into Customer Service Training and into training modules for NGV contractors.

Responsibility: Front of House team

Timeline: From May 2010

Evaluation: Training materials will have been revised

Acknowledgements

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Contacting NGV about this Disability Action Plan

If you have any questions in relation to the NGV's Disability Action Plan please contact the General Manager Marketing.

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If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, such as large print or audio, please telephone or email ngvaccess@ngv.vic.gov.au with your request. The NGV Disability Action Plan can be downloaded in PDF or XPS formats on www.ngv.vic.gov.au/dap