CITY OF MELBOURNE

City of Melbourne Libraries

Disability Inclusion and Accessibility Plan 2022-25

Acknowledgement

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wadawurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin have to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

Introduction

As part of the Creative City branch, City of Melbourne Libraries help our city, and everyone in it, to learn, create and contribute to our rapidly changing world. Our vision, in our work, is to leave no one behind, resulting in a city that is locally loved and globally recognised.

City of Melbourne (CoM) is committed to being a 'city for people' — one that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all. As one of the world's most liveable cities, we strive to demonstrate and lead best practice in universal access. Equity of access is a human right. The City of Melbourne acknowledges the right of people with disabilities to equitable and full participation in all aspects of city life.

The City of Melbourne Libraries Disability, Inclusion and Accessibility Plan (DIAP) has been created following the Social Model of Disability and utilising the core City of Melbourne values. We focussed those values into the four principles as found in Section 38 the Victoria Disability Act 2006.

2006 Victoria Disability Act.

1. Reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;

2. Reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;

3. Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability;

4. Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practice which discriminate against persons with a disability

In developing this plan we also embrace the City of Melbourne Disability Access Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation.

City of Melbourne Libraries is committed to ensuring that all of its offerings are accessible and inclusive to all people. This includes all people to access equitable library services, programs, facilities, information, communication and the employment system.

This plan makes reference to City of Melbourne Disability Access Plan 2020-2024, Embracing Equity in Participation 15 September 2020. Other documents produced by City of Melbourne Libraries that may be of interest include:

Future_Library_Framework_2021.pdf (amazonaws.com)

City of Melbourne Libraries Plan 2017 – 2021 – DM 11424118

Collection Development Policy – DM 11354524

Library Use Policy – DM 1473877

Internet Access Policy – DM 9611927

Membership Policy – DM 8371915

Objective

We know that the relevance and strength of our work relies upon the diversity of people involved in conceiving and making it. This Disability Inclusion and Accessibility Plan (DIAP) is an expression of our intentions at this time.

We hope to see the ambitions contained within the plan grow over the coming years, in step with the goals, needs and ideas of people with a disability. We view our DIAP as a living, working document and we are excited to imagine the new possibilities for libraries that will come with its realisation, and evolution.

City of Melbourne Libraries follows the council's commitment to diversity and inclusion and is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing a safe working environment and embracing diversity.

This DIAP has been created following the Social Model of Disability and utilising the core City of Melbourne values. We focussed those values into the four principles as found in the 38th section of the 2006 Victoria Disability Act.

City of Melbourne Values

Integrity – Be honest and reliable, have integrity

Courage – Speak up, have courage, make things happen

Accountability – Act with accountability, be responsible for what you do and how you do it

Respect – Be inclusive, stay open, value every voice, establish respect and collaborate

Excellence – Display excellence, work with energy and passion achieving the best results

Social Model of Disability

The Social Model of Disability is based on the understanding that disability is caused by barriers to participation in community life, rather than by a person's own impairment. It also acknowledges that disability may be permanent or temporary, and is often not visible. The Social Model places the person at the forefront and highlights that it is the environment or negative attitudes that are disabling for people with disabilities. Its emphasis is on dignity, independence and choice.

Budget commitment

Access is built into the overall City of Melbourne Libraries budget. If funds need to be raised for a specific project this becomes an action in the DIAP. Building specific cost will be sought annually via City of Melbourne overall Disability Discrimination Act infrastructure budget.

Access and Inclusion Working Group

The implementation of the City of Melbourne Libraries DIAP is a whole organisation approach. The DIAP will be maintained by the City of Melbourne Libraries Access and Inclusion Working Group who champion access within their respective teams and throughout the library service. This group meets monthly to ensure the DIAP goals are actioned and updated according to the timeline.

This DIAP has been written in consultation with Will Box from Arts House. This group is reportable to City of Melbourne Libraries Leadership Team and the Director, Creative City.

The group includes:

Bernadine Nolen

Greg Jones

Kathryn Donkin

Kimberley Pierzchalski

Louise Atkinson

Additional research conducted by:

Eryn Moore

Melissa Bell

Ting Xu

This DIAP will be reviewed annually by the Library Leadership team, Creative City Branch Manager and City of Melbourne Senior Policy Officer Access and Inclusion, Community Development Branch.

Evaluation

City of Melbourne Libraries will work across all teams to achieve implementation, assessments and goals of this DIAP. An annual progress report will be published on the City of Melbourne Libraries website, and available by request in alternative formats.

Key Objectives:

Outcome 1: Our buildings and public spaces demonstrate best practice in universal access

    1.1.   Deliver best practice where possible in regards to collections and physical spaces within and outside our branches.

    1.2.   Focus on our online spaces as well as physical, specifically the accessibility and navigation of our website, eCollections and buildings.

Outcome 2: Marketing and Communication is inclusive and accessible to all

    2.1.   All library marketing, and communications and information services are accessible and available in alternative formats.

    2.2.   Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability

Outcome 3: Through our programs, events, festivals and civic engagements diversity is valued, visible, and supported

    3.1.   Targeted programs and partnerships with disability groups, organisations and individuals.

Outcome 4: Enhance employment opportunities for people with disability

    4.1.   Staff training and development, and recruitment opportunities.

Outcome 1: Our buildings and public spaces demonstrate best practice in universal access

Actions	Team Responsible	Implementation Timeline	Outcome and Evaluation

1. Regularly remind all Library and Hubs staff to report back any areas of concern to the DIAP working group who will forward onto the Property branch for addition to the Disability Discrimination Act compliance documentation
 	
2. Engage with Library Leadership Team to ensure that all planning of new buildings and infrastructure has accessibility front of mind:
 	
  - Use by staff and patrons
 	
  - Outside areas including drop off points and footpaths
 	
  - Furniture is suitable, incl. range of seating and work tables
 	
  - Access to bookable spaces appropriate
 	
  - Access to quiet reflection space
	DIAP Working Group and CoM Libraries Library Leadership Team
	
	Property Services
	
	Library Branch Team Leaders
		Ongoing – reviewed every 6 months, record updates in progress report
		
		Implementation of changes – pending success of 2022/23 Disability Discrimination Act funding
			Incorporate lived experience reviewers feedback
			
			Staff report any feedback on access at all staff meetings
			
			Response to access questions in general surveys

3. Conduct website audit for best practice and inclusion - Engage external company to review website – compare to best practice accessibility websites	Library Leadership Team Marketing – CoM Libraries and CoM CoM City Communications External audit – led by Vision Australia	Budget approved Mar 2023 Vision Australia to audit Advisory Review completed June 2023 Implement changes 2023	Increase accessibility and usability of website Budget for recommendations to be factored in 2022-23

4.	Improve signage inside and outside all libraries	Libraries Branch Team Leaders CoM Marketing Property Services	Signage installed inside and outside all libraries by December 2023 External signage installed at Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre, Southbank Library and Library at The Dock	Advisory committee feedback received. Customer service surveys feedback.
5.	Conduct an audit on universal access equipment available to determine what additional equipment is required eg. Hearing loops, keyboards	CoM Libraries Technology and Innovation Team	Accessibility equipment available for use in libraries	Feedback received
6.	Continual review of library collections Review of Collections Policy to ensure purchasing includes diverse titles	CoM Libraries Reader and Development and Collections Team	Ongoing – reviewed every 6 months, record updates in progress report	Feedback received and collection evaluated
Outcome 2: Marketing and Communication is inclusive and accessible to all				
7.	Accessibility page on the website detailing visiting the Libraries or attending digital or online programs, using bookable spaces, information on access symbols, DIAP advisory process and mission statement	CoM Libraries marketing team on direction from CoM Libraries DIAP Working Group	Access page established – additional information to be updated by December 2023 and maintained	Provide a quick view of accessible services and programs for patrons Evaluate during Vision Australia website audit and advisory group – October 2023 Feedback on the website from users Review by advisory group/reviewers with various needs complete
8.	Develop a Communications Plan to promote CoM Libraries DIAP	DIAP Working Group CoM Libraries Marketing team	Communications Plan drafted by Working Group December 2022	The community is aware that access and inclusion are core values of CoM Libraries DIAP, reviewed by Advisory Group and signed off.

			DIAP available and visible on CoM Libraries website

Outcome 3: Through our programs, events, festivals and civic engagements diversity is valued, visible, and supported

9. Improve inclusivity in programming - Staff provided with relevant training eg, use short sentences, simple language - Incorporate assistive technologies - Collaborations and partnerships with organisations to expand community led activations - Involve support groups and those with lived experience in co-designing programs	CoM Libraries program staff CoM Libraries Technology and Innovation team	Ongoing – reviewed every 6 months, record updates in progress report	Feedback received

Outcome 4: Enhance employment opportunities for people with disability

10. Review policies, procedures to ensure people with a disability are welcomed by ensuring language is welcoming and non-discriminatory and inclusive 11. Support will be offered by - Library Social Worker - Staff trained in inclusivity - Referral to other CoM services	CoM Libraries DIAP Working Group CoM Libraries Library Leadership Group Library Social Worker All Staff CoM Recruitment CoM Libraries Learning and Development	Ongoing – reviewed every 6 months, record updates in progress report	Diverse and confident staff Balanced representation of Melbourne's community Neuro diverse training offered to all staff Targeted recruitment and support

12. Promote job recruitment - Advertise via diverse channels - Ensure appropriate workplace accommodation - Respond to flexible working arrangements - Adaptive technologies - Offer mentorships			

Footnotes:

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-24 (melbourne.vic.gov.au) p4

References:

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-24 (melbourne.vic.gov.au)

https://www.alia.org.au/about-alia/policies-and-guidelines/alia-policies/guidelines-library-standards-people-disabilities

https://www.grlc.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Geelong%20Regional%20Libraries%20Disability%20Access%20and%20Inclusion%20Plan.pdf

https://yprl-filestore.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/policies/YPRL-Disability-Action-Plan.pdf

a planning guide for library buildings

https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/people-places

All below reports are available at www.accessingmelbourne.vic.gov.au and requests for reports in alternative formats can be made at 9658 9658 or www.melbourne.vic.gov.au.

1. 2012 Economic Benefits of Universal Access, Monash University *
2. 2015 Understanding Accessibility for Sensory Disability – Qualitative Research Inquiry, Studio Thick *
3. 2017 Demographics and Disability Service Mapping Across City of Melbourne Suburbs, AURIN Melbourne University
4. 2019 Everyone's Moomba, Melbourne University in conjunction with Committee for Melbourne*
5. 2019 Making Melbourne more inclusive for people with disability, Melbourne University (Disability Institute) *
6. 2019 Disability Demographics Infographics and International Best Practice, Nerd Digital

7. 2019 Showcasing Access and Inclusion – Cutting through a complex legislative and policy landscape with co-design, Visionary Design Development*

8. 2020 Making Melbourne more inclusive for children and young people with disability, Melbourne University*.

9. 2012 Economic Benefits of Universal Access, Monash University *

10. 2015 Understanding Accessibility for Sensory Disability – Qualitative Research Inquiry, Studio Thick *

11. 2017 Demographics and Disability Service Mapping Across City of Melbourne Suburbs, AURIN Melbourne University

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13. 2019 Making Melbourne more inclusive for people with disability, Melbourne University (Disability Institute) *

14. 2019 Disability Demographics Infographics and International Best Practice, Nerd Digital

15. 2019 Showcasing Access and Inclusion – Cutting through a complex legislative and policy landscape with co-design, Visionary Design Development*

16. 2020 Making Melbourne more inclusive for children and young people with disability, Melbourne University*.

*co-design research methodologies