

# GOOD ACCESS IS GOOD BUSINESS

## Customer Access<sup>1</sup> Checklist for Festivals and Events

The City of Melbourne has introduced the 'Good Access is Good Business' publications and education program to support city businesses to meet the legal (Disability Discrimination Act 1992) and community expectations of fair access for all members of the community to all goods, services, entertainment and recreational opportunities available within the city.

This self-assessment checklist has been developed to provide a guide to how accessible your festival or event is. This can also be used as a guide when planning improvements or when selecting venues for festivals or events.

### Why is access so important?

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, approximately 4.2 million Australians, or 18.5% of the population, had a disability. Statistically it is likely that everyone knows and engages with people with a disability through immediate family, friends or colleagues. It would seem smart to plan a festival or event that actively supports the needs of all people.

Festivals and events that are accessible for people with disabilities will be more successful with attendance rates and will provide you with increased economic benefits. By taking into account the varying needs of all individuals, you are creating more opportunities for everyone to join in as participants.

### Your legal obligations

The Commonwealth legislation that deals with access issues is the Disability *Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*. The DDA requires that people with disabilities be given equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to the full range of social, political and cultural activities which are available within the community. Under this law, festival and

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<sup>1</sup> Access / Accessible – means that a person with a disability is, without assistance able to approach, enter, pass to and from and make use of an area and its facilities. Source Municipal Association of Victoria – Access on Line [www.mav.asn.au/access](http://www.mav.asn.au/access)

event owners, operators and sponsors have a legal obligation to avoid discrimination and, when possible, to remove barriers. By taking action to ensure your festival or event is accessible, you are eliminating the possibility of complaints of discrimination which may also result in penalties and expensive court proceedings.

### **Principles of good access**

Access for people with disabilities is not just about the physical access to buildings and facilities, but also about access to information for people who are deaf or vision impaired and the attitudes of all staff, including organisers, ticketing staff, volunteers and performers. Therefore the basic requirements of good access are that the **physical, information and attitudinal** environments are barrier free.

The following checklist is a comprehensive guide that will benefit festival and event owners, organisers and operators. It has been developed to assist you in planning for universal access. Some points may only be relevant, others may seem impossible for now, but by understanding and identifying future actions to take to achieve all of the following, you are contributing to the development of Melbourne as a city for everyone.

If you require specialist information it is recommended that you seek professional advice. Contact details are provided on pages 9 and 10.

**Does your festival or event venue provide any of the following?:** **Yes**  
(Tick if applicable to your event)

#### ***Access to buildings / premises***

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- Clear external and internal directional signs including symbols
- Accessible parking for people with disabilities on site or close-by
- Accessible pathways from car parking to the site and all facilities
- Accessible parking for scooter users
- Accessible public transport close-by
- Clear path of travel from outdoor to indoor areas
- Step free access as an alternative to any steps or stairs on the site
- Wide self-opening or easy to open doors
- Protection from wind, rain and noise in outdoor areas

## ***Ease of access when moving around venues***

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- Lever style door handles at an accessible height
- Safety markings on glass doors and adjacent panels
- Colour contrasting door frames / trims
- A handrail from the entrance to the main service counter
- Enough space between furniture, stalls, exhibits or in busy areas for a person to easily manoeuvre a mobility aid (e.g. wheelchair, walking frame, stick, crutches)
- Slip resistant floor and ground surfaces
- Covered grassed and/or dirt pathways to improve access
- Covers over cables or wires to prevent tripping
- Limited use of roped barriers
- Ramp or lift access to all levels
- Handrails and contrasting edges on any steps
- Colour contrasting handrails and seating on mobile exhibits
- No overhanging foliage on pathways
- Tactile tiles prior to steps, ramps, jetties, piers and other hazards
- Accessible on-site transport if required
- Access to any mobile attractions e.g. trains, buses, rides etc.
- Clearly signed passenger stops and vehicles
- Seatbelts on any mobile attractions
- Wheelchairs for loan
- Access support personnel to assist where necessary e.g. pushing wheelchair
- Access to and within viewing areas and lookouts e.g. near parade routes
- Consistent and even lighting along pathways
- Effective glare free lighting at service counters
- Lighting on stair edges in dark entertainment areas

## ***Accessible facilities and amenities***

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- Direct, signposted access to a designated accessible toilet
- An accessible baby change area
- Step free access to stage and change room areas
- Definition of stage edges in entertainment areas
- Access to speakers or performers platforms
- Low height or roving microphones
- Low height or adjustable lecterns
- Spaces for a person using a wheelchair to sit with friends
- Wheelchair accessible seating at various locations in venue
- Seating with backs and armrests
- Seating with colour contrast to walls and floors
- Accessible rest areas including seating, lighting, drinking fountains, shelter at low height, 'clutter free' ticket counters with a seat
- Accessible self-service counters / display area
- Ticket and reception counters at and accessible height, with leg room suitable for use by a person using a wheelchair
- An accessible buzzer on ticket counters
- Accessible water / tea / coffee facilities
- Access to any bar / kiosk area ( including low height bar area)
- Accessible storage area for mobility aids
- Good acoustics throughout venues
- Hearing augmentation systems
- Water for assistance animals
- First aid support
- Accessible information and support area
- Suitable height exhibits for people using wheelchairs
- Accessible sharps disposal units
- Access to any vending machines / food outlets / kiosk / drinking taps
- Space for storing mobility aids and baggage

- Access to any boat ramps, jetties or fishing platforms
- Access via decking or floating entry to any beach or lake areas
- Access via ramp or beach entry to any swimming areas/pools
- Availability of 'beach/pool accessible' wheelchair for loan
- Access to any camping sites and facilities
- Accessible picnic areas with shelter, seats and BBQs
- Access to any playgrounds and play equipment

***Accessible provision of information***

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- A Mobility Map of the site indicating accessible parking, toilets, paths, attractions etc.
- Information regarding public transport access to the site
- Information regarding drop off points close to entries
- Accessible guided tours
- Information about services for people with disabilities e.g.
  - Lift
  - Accessible toilet
  - Emergency procedures
- Audio information and Braille buttons in any lifts
- A taped phone message about events, services and facilities
- An accessible Website with information about services and events
- Large print, raised tactile, Braille and audio signage
- An 'assistance animal welcome' sticker at entries, (e.g. guide hearing dog)
- Information in large print and Braille
- A 'Good Access is Good Business' customer assistance card on service counters
- Clear, large print name tags on staff
- Audio descriptions of performances and displays
- Audio guides for exhibits and displays
- Alternatives to any audible announcements e.g. visible display

- Captioning on any film or video screens
- Tactile depiction of artist displays e.g. paintings
- Audible descriptions of attractions on any shuttle service
- Raised tactile and Braille markings on any lift buttons
- Audible information in any lifts
- Raised tactile signage and Braille on mobile exhibits
- Hearing augmentation at service counters and in performance areas
- Alternatives to any audible announcements e.g. visible display
- Accessible public telephone
- Telephone Typewriter (TTY) and SMS contact numbers
- Captions on any film or video screens
- An Internet booking system
- A telephone booking system
- Accessible payment options
- Acceptance of 'companion cards'

***Staff who are able to communicate appropriately with people with disabilities***

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- Friendly helpful staff, trained in access awareness
- Staff available to read information to patrons if required
- Staff with basic sign language skills
- Sign language interpreters if required
- Staff who speak clearly and look at the patrons when talking  
(for easy lip reading)
- Pen and paper for exchanging information
- Staff available to assist in self-service areas

***Responsive evacuation procedures***

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- Visible and audible fire alarms
- Accessible emergency exits
- Emergency evacuation procedures that respond to all users

## CUSTOMER ACCESS PLAN

Now you have completed the access checklist, you will have identified a number of areas where you are providing good access. You will also have identified areas that require access improvement.

You can now use this page to begin to develop a Customer Access Plan for your festival or event venue based on the answers you could not check YES in the Checklist.

Start by grouping access action you need to take, into the following areas:

- Action you can take now for little or no cost;
- Action you can take in the medium term that doesn't require renovation to your venues;
- Action you will need to take during a refurbishment or redevelopment of your venues to provide access for all.

Under the Building Code of Australia, you are required to provide access for people with disabilities in any renovation or redevelopment project relating to buildings.

If you don't own your venues, you can also start to talk to the owners about the legal requirements of providing access for all, as they are also responsible under the DDA.

Please refer to the Good Access is Good Business publications and telephone 9658 9658 if you require additional copies or information.

### ***Disclaimer***

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# **CUSTOMER ACCESS PLAN**

## **Short Term Action/s**

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## **Medium Term Action/s**

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## **Long Term Action/s**

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## **What resources are available to me?**

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The City of Melbourne can provide advice and referral to businesses in regard to disability access issues.

### **City of Melbourne**

Phone: 03 9658 8587

Website: [www.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

Alternatively, there are many government, community and private agencies that can assist you on specific issues in relation to disability rights and discrimination, Australian standards and information in alternative, accessible formats.

### **Australian Human Rights Commission**

The Australian Human Rights Commission can assist you with legislation, rights and responsibilities and can link you with resources to ensure your event is accessible.

Phone: 02 9284 9600 or 1300 369 711

TTY: 1800 620 241

Website: [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)

### **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission**

Phone: 1300 891 848

TTY: 1300 289 621

Website: [www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au)

### **Australian Building Codes Board**

Information on federal building regulations and codes.

Phone: 1300 134 631

Website: [www.abcb.gov.au](http://www.abcb.gov.au)

For further information on Australian Standards go to

Website: [www.standards.org.au](http://www.standards.org.au)

The AS 1428.1 is the primary technical reference.

### **Association of Consultants in Access Australia**

There are a number of recognised disability access consultants who can conduct an access audit of your venues and provide you with specialist advice and assistance for developing an access plan.

Phone: 03 5221 2820

[www.access.asn.au](http://www.access.asn.au)    [www.disabilityconsultants.com.au/](http://www.disabilityconsultants.com.au/)

### **Vision Australia**

Vision Australia can assist you with translating written information to alternative, accessible formats.

Phone: 1300 84 74 66

Website: [www.visionaustralia.org.au](http://www.visionaustralia.org.au)

### **VicDeaf**

VicDeaf can provide sign language interpreters and assistive hearing devices are available for hire.

Phone: 03 9473 1111

TTY: 9473 1199

Website: [www.vicdeaf.com.au](http://www.vicdeaf.com.au)

### **Disability Information Victoria (DIVINE)**

An online community for and by people with a disability, which provides information on all disability services available in Victoria.

Website: [www.divine.vic.gov.au](http://www.divine.vic.gov.au)

## **Other useful guides for accessible festivals and events**

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### **Accessible events – a guide for organisers**

This guide was developed by the Meetings and Events Industry of Australia in collaboration with the Australian Human Rights Commission. It is designed to help those responsible for organising events to ensure they are accessible for people with a disability - whether they are presenters, sponsors or participants.

Website: [www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au](http://www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au)

### **Creating Accessible Events**

Developed by the Disability Services Commission, this resource is designed to assist with planning events and functions that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Website: [www.disability.wa.gov.au](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au)