



# Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023 - 2027

# Acknowledgement of Country

International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) stands and operates on the land of the Gadigal clan of the Eora Nation. In the spirit of reconciliation and as a demonstration of respect for the traditional laws, customs, cultures and country of the First Peoples of this land, ICC Sydney warmly acknowledges the traditional custodians of Gadigal Country and demonstrates respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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# About this Plan

ICC Sydney is a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace that encourages every member of the team to bring their whole self to work. We recognise and value diverse skills, knowledge, backgrounds and perspectives and wish to embed this within all parts of our venue. ICC Sydney is committed to investing in people and reducing inequalities, as highlighted within the ASM Global ACTS Framework and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. To further establish our role as an employer of choice and as an accessible and inclusive venue for all people, we have developed our inaugural Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). Our DIAP will act as a roadmap for us to follow over the next four years with the goal of increasing disability, accessibility and inclusion venue wide. We look forward to working with our clients, patrons, team members and people with disability throughout the life of the Plan.

## Message from CEO



Bujari Gamarruwa (*'good day'* in the language of the Gadigal people),

International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) is proud to acknowledge people with disability and the strong contribution they make as members of our team, as clients, visitors to the events at our venue and members of our richly diverse community.

With 1.3 billion people with a disability across the world today, and one in five Australians identifying as a person with a disability, ICC Sydney is committed to driving increased accessibility. We are grateful to our partners

at Get Skilled Access (GSA) - an organisation that was founded in 2016 by 2022 Australian of the Year and Paralympian Dylan Alcott - for their collaboration and guidance with this important initiative. GSA aims for better accessibility and inclusion for everyone, by ensuring the insights from people with a disability are at the core of inclusive decision making and planning.

Underpinning the information provided within our Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide for event organisers and Accessibility and Inclusion information for visitors, our DIAP will provide an informed and benchmarked foundational resource to guide our internal operations and reduce barriers to professional development or access to resources, content and facilities at ICC Sydney.

We recognise and value diverse skills, knowledge, backgrounds and perspectives and strive to embed this within all parts of our operations and the unique and positive culture we are proud to have.

As an employer of choice in the business events industry, we take seriously our leadership role, and our DIAP acts as our roadmap

to progress towards our goal of increased accessibility and inclusion venue wide across the coming four years.

As an iconic destination which hosts millions of visitors at hundreds of conferences, exhibitions and events each year, ICC Sydney has a unique opportunity to foster and promote inclusion at every level and our team of passionate professionals are at the centre of our approach. To date, ICC Sydney has progressed several inclusion initiatives and will continue to build upon these through the DIAP, including:

- Reactivation of our disability inclusion program and employee resource group Able@Work that fosters a welcoming work environment and encourages team member engagement activities.
- Acknowledging days of significance, such as International Day of People with Disability, through our communications channels helping to raise awareness, understanding and inclusion of people with a disability with our audiences.
- Ensuring our people programs, including recruitment campaigns, are inclusive and welcome interest and engagement from people of all backgrounds and abilities.
- Developing a network of key stakeholders to advise and engage with including our partners at Get Skilled Access,
- Autism Spectrum Australia and The Sunflower Project to ensure our internal policies, procedures and cultural practices are accessible and inclusive to people of all abilities.
- Extending our collaboration with businesses that align with our DIAP to broaden the reach and the impact of our inclusive approach in our community and along our supply chain.

We look forward to working with our stakeholders, clients, patrons, suppliers, team members and people in our community with disability to effectively live out the commitments of our Plan.

**Geoff Donaghy**

Chief Executive Officer, ICC Sydney  
Group Director - Convention Centres, ASM Global (APAC)

# About Disability

- According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, individuals with disability encompass those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments, which, when combined with various barriers, may impede equal participation in society (United Nations 2006).
- In Australia, over 4 million people have disability (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022).
- It is estimated that 80% of disability is nonvisible (Hidden Disabilities 2023).
- 2.1 million working-age Australians live with disability, with an estimated unemployment rate of 10% (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022).
- Intersectionality is a term that acknowledges that often, disability does not exist on its own, and that there are additional risks of discrimination that can be present for people who identify with other marginalised groups or social factors. These may include race, gender, sexuality and religion. By being aware of intersectionality, we can be more mindful of the experience of people with disability and the impact of accessibility and inclusion. Statistics relevant to intersectionality can be found below:
  - 1 million Australians with disability are from a non-English speaking background (Queensland Government 2022)
  - 24% of First Nations people have disability, this is twice the rate of the general population (Australia Institute of Health and Welfare 2023)
  - 39% of LGBTQIA+ people aged 14 to 21 identify as having disability or long-term health conditions (LGBTIQ+ Australia 2021)
  - Over one third of women with disability experience some form of intimate partner violence (Women with Disabilities Victoria 2019).



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# Supporting a Social Model of Disability

People with disability have been historically viewed through the medical model of disability, which focuses on what people with disability can't do rather than what they can do, and that disability is a problem that requires treatment, or its impacts minimised.

The social model of disability holds a more contemporary view of disability and highlights that it's the external barriers such as the built environment, attitudes, systems and processes and communication that impacts the participation of people with disability. It does not deny the impact of barriers on people with disability but rather places the onus of those barriers away from people with disability and onto the accessibility and inclusiveness of society. It recognises that like race, religion or gender, disability is just another part of a person's identity. ICC Sydney supports the social model of disability and the aim for this DIAP to assist in removing the external barriers that impact the day-to-day experiences of people with disability in society.

## Strategy Alignment

The Australian Disability Strategy 2021-2031 acts as Australia's roadmap for an accessible and inclusive society. ICC Sydney has prepared this DIAP to align with the government's vision as stated within the Australian Disability Strategy to ensure that all people, including people with disability, can participate equally in society.

## Key Outcome Areas of our DIAP - (The four pillars of inclusion)

Our DIAP covers four key pillars, which were identified in consultation with the Get Skilled Access team throughout the discovery process. Through a series of focus groups, we identified areas where opportunities exist to further improve disability inclusion. The four pillars of inclusion for this DIAP are:

1. Culture
2. Built & Digital Environment
3. Employment
4. Systems & Processes



## Discovery Process

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024 - 2027 was developed following a comprehensive discovery process, which included a desktop review, four focus groups with over sixty (60) of our team members, leaders and people with lived experience of disability, as well as a team member survey.

The desktop review gave us the opportunity to look at our policies, processes, resources and the website from a disability inclusion lens.

During August 2023, we held four focus groups, co-led with Get Skilled Access, which allowed people from across the organisation, including those with disability, to share their day-to-day experiences of disability inclusion across the business. The feedback from these sessions, including how we can improve disability inclusion outcomes and remove barriers to participation, now inform the actions within this DIAP. We look forward to continuing to consult with our people, specifically those with disability, as the Plan progresses.

The team member survey ensured the experiences and opinions of team members who were unable to attend the focus groups were considered. This included our large pool of casual team members as well as our permanent team.

# Snapshot of Consultation Feedback

Across the desktop review, focus groups and the team member survey, key findings emerged. Aligned to the four pillars of inclusion, findings included:

## Culture

- ICC Sydney has a strong culture of inclusion, and the intent of the organisation is to ensure equal and dignified participation for all clients, delegates, guests, patrons and team members.
- Team members want more training in relation to disability inclusion so they can further embed appropriate practices in their roles and teams.
- There is executive support for inclusive training to be provided to all team members at all levels within ICC Sydney.
- Inclusive practices such as walk-throughs of event spaces are currently offered for people who are blind or have low vision.
- Disability inclusion programs and employee resources groups such as Able@Work have previously been established but as a result of the impact of COVID and team changes, are not operating (at the time of survey but has been re-established).
- ICC Sydney celebrates International Day of People with Disability both internally and externally.
- There is an opportunity to highlight disability on the agenda when making important decisions relating to the business.
- ICC Sydney is currently undertaking the Sunflower Project with Hidden Disabilities.
- In a survey of 60 team members, 70% felt ICC Sydney has a disability inclusive culture.
- In a survey of 60 team members, 85% felt ICC Sydney provides an environment for people to disclose their disability.
- There is a desire for back of house team members to have the same disability inclusion training as front of house team members.

## Built & Digital Environment

- The ICC Sydney website considers the needs of people by providing significant detail regarding the accessibility of the space.
- Accessible bathrooms, lifts, accessible seating and changing places are currently available at ICC Sydney.
- Some team members have concerns about the weight of the accessible bathroom door. At present, only one bathroom door in the venue is automatic.
- There can be barriers for people with disability who require access to ICC Sydney stages at late notice.
- The ICC Sydney website meets the most up to date WCAG standards.
- All major theatres have hearing loop capability.
- Wayfinding has been identified as a barrier at the venue.
- There is no designated quiet space for team members with a disability.
- There is limited access to wheelchairs at the venue.

## Employment

- Team Members express keenness to undertake misconception and unconscious bias training as well as inclusive recruitment training.
- There are opportunities to increase the inclusive experience for people with disability during the recruitment process.
- Inclusive statements were not included on job ads (this has been updated as have inclusive statements on invitations to ICC Sydney hosted events).
- Whilst ICC Sydney is happy to implement inclusive recruitment practices, this is currently not well publicised externally.
- Human Resources team at ICC Sydney is committed to finding roles that meet the needs of people with disability.
- ICC Sydney engages with Jobsupport, however they are limited to supporting people with intellectual disability and do not support people with varying types of disability.
- ICC Sydney currently works with disability recruitment agencies to increase the employment of people with disability at the venue.
- In a survey of 60 team members, 83% felt the recruitment process at ICC Sydney was accessible and inclusive for people with disability.



## Systems & Processes

- Team members would like further support to ensure their external and internal communications are accessible and inclusive for people with disability.
- Whilst team members are committed to making reasonable adjustments, there is an opportunity to embed this process in relevant policies and procedures.
- Some team members, particularly casual team members, are unsure of the process around requesting reasonable adjustments.
- Team members would like a greater understanding regarding the emergency evacuation process with people with disability.
- ICC Sydney have a clear flexible work policy for all team members to utilise.
- Internal communications can be inaccessible for some people with disability.

## Measurement of Progress

Our DIAP's success will be assessed against the following measures:

- Actions successfully implemented over the life of the Plan.
- Engaging with the team members that have been consulted and have contributed to the development of the Plan.
- Quarterly reporting to the Able@Work working group and the Corporate Social Responsibility Steering Committee.
- Providing ongoing updates and progress on the actions of the DIAP to the executive team and the CEO.
- Noting achievements in our Annual Performance Report and ASM Global Reporting.



# ICC Sydney Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023 - 2027

## Culture

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### Action

**Provide disability capability and confidence training organisation wide, including executive leaders as well as casual team members.**

### Implementation

- Ensure disability training includes topics such as disability disclosure, asking about access requirements, inclusive language and etiquette, misconception and unconscious bias training, inclusive recruitment, non-visible disability and having comfortable conversations.
- Embed disability inclusion training to the onboarding process.
- Where possible, provide hybrid disability training facilitated by people with lived experience of disability.
- Ensure team members are aware of the accessible features and navigational tools within ICC Sydney.
- Provide education to ticketing team members about how to identify what seating is appropriate based on the patron's access needs.
- Provide training to team members reviewing client plans about the different types of disability to ensure true accessibility is considered from the planning stage.
- There is an opportunity to have a disability representative during induction, similar to the LGBTQIA+ representative.

## Culture

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### **Action**

**Increase the signs and symbols of disability inclusion across the organisation.**

### **Implementation**

- Ensure disability accessibility and inclusion is on the agenda of relevant ICC Sydney meetings. This may include meetings relevant to event planning, Human Resources, facilities, food and beverages and more.
- Share disability success stories across the organisation via regularly accessed communication channels.
- Continue to celebrate International Day of People with Disability within the organisation and ensure the celebration is well socialised widely both internally and externally.
- Where possible, consider celebrating other important dates for people with disability including R U OK day, World Autism Day, neurodiversity week and global accessibility awareness day.

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### **Action**

**Embed standardised practices to proactively ask team members, clients and patrons if they have access requirements.**

### **Implementation**

- Ensure current inclusive practices, such as providing patrons with an opportunity to do a walk-through of the venue prior to the event, are embedded within other areas of the organisation as standard practice.
- Consider providing an open day for patrons and potential team members with disability to access the venue and identify accessible routes/features available to them in a quiet and relaxed environment.

## Culture

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- Ensure clients are consulted about accessibility features prior to their event, ensuring the set-up is appropriate for all people, including people with disability.
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### **Action**

**Re-establish the Able@Work stream to help drive disability inclusion at ICC Sydney.**

### **Implementation**

- Identify team members within the business to participate in Able@Work.
- Develop a term of reference that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the stream and the influence it can have on the business.
- Socialise the re-establishment of Able@Work both internally and externally, increasing the signs and symbols of disability inclusion within the organisation.
- Ensure the stream is made up of an intersectionality of roles.
- Responsibilities of the group should include ensuring disability is on the agenda across the business.
- Where possible, support people with lived experience of disability to join the stream if they feel comfortable.

## Culture

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### **Action**

Continue to invest in programs such as the Sunflower Project.

### **Implementation**

- Continue to roll out the Sunflower Project to all team members within ICC Sydney and invest in Sunflower signage.
- Consider working with Autism Spectrum Australia to develop resources for team members at ICC Sydney.

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### **Action**

Ensure ICC Sydney's EAP service is accessible for all people.

### **Implementation**

- Promote contact methods for team members to use in addition to a phone number including a text message, video call or email address. This will support the needs of people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, non-verbal or who are neurodiverse and may prefer to communicate in means other than the phone.

## Built & Digital Environment

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### Action

Create a solution that allows dignified and universal access for all people wishing to access ICC Sydney stages.

### Implementation

- Consider purchasing an onsite ramp that can be easily accessed if the wheelchair lift is broken.
- Purchasing several adjustable lecterns which can meet the access needs of all people including wheelchair users and people of short stature. Purchase a couple of examples.
- Ensure stairs to stages and theatres have handrails always attached. Purchase a few that can be used across the building.

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### Action

Continue to meet the most recent WCAG standards, ensuring gold standard digital accessibility.

### Implementation

- Ensure the website colour contrasting as well as its navigation are accessible for people with disability.
- Ensure alt. text embedded on all photos/pictures on digital sites.
- Ensure captioning is included on all videos created by ICC Sydney.
- Ensure font sizes used on the website are accessible for people with disability.
- Ensure screen reader technology can access information made available on the ICC Sydney website.

## Built & Digital Environment

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- Fix the link to the interactive venue map and ensure it is accessible for people with disability. For people who use screen reader technology, this information may need to be provided in text rather than via the map.
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### **Action**

**Conduct a wayfinding audit of ICC Sydney venues and identify opportunities to improve navigation for people with disability.**

### **Implementation**

- Where possible utilise the experience of people with disability to review the wayfinding features at the venue and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Ensure signs are appropriately colour contrasted and use font colours that are easily legible.
- Consider the wayfinding experience for patrons regarding both permanent and temporary signage. An example of when temporary signage may be used includes when additional car parking spaces have been created for disability expos.
- Review existing signage to determine where braille is not accessible and over time adjust to include.



## Built & Digital Environment

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### Action

Increase accessibility features across the venue and embed universal design in current practices as well as in future redevelopments or refurbishments.

### Implementation

- Seated dining areas are to include some accessible seating for wheelchair and mobility scooter users.
- Investigate purchasing new wheelchairs for the venue that can be self-propelled safely.
- Investigate if there is an opportunity for the buggy to be available more frequently, supporting people with disability to navigate the long distances of travel required at ICC Sydney.
- Invest in more changing places facilities that consider ease of access from different parts of the venue.
- Increase the number of accessible car parking spaces available at the venue.
- Ensure lift entrances are left clear and are not used for storage purposes.
- Increase the inclusion for people who are blind or have low vision by reviewing the volume of the navigation descriptor in all elevators (both in the back and front of house) and identifying whether it can be amplified.
- When redeveloping future ICC Sydney spaces, increase the number of automatic doors on accessible bathroom.
- Ensure handrails are provided in back of house elevators as well as in other relevant areas in ICC Sydney.

## Built & Digital Environment

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- Consider labelling cloths rather than just relying on the thread colours as they can be difficult for some team members to identify who are colour blind.
  - Consider replacing office lighting with dimmable options.
  - Ensure machines that support team members to clock-in are accessible for people of short stature or wheelchair users.
- 

### **Action**

**Create an accessibility document/guide for team members, clients and patrons regarding accessibility information/features at ICC Sydney to be embedded on the website.**

### **Implementation**

- Include information regarding accessible parking (including how many spaces there are) and assistance animals, the distance of different spaces within the venue, where the accessible bathrooms are located (including those with an automatic door), the location of the changing places and how to request reasonable adjustments and equipment such as wheelchairs and an on-site buggy. Though most of this information is already present on the ICC Sydney website, providing an additional guide that has the relevant information in one place, and can be downloaded for ease of use, would reflect a gold standard of inclusion.
- Ensure the guide highlights that whilst meeting rooms are accessible for people with disability, stages are not accessible for wheelchair users and that adjustments will need to be made if this is required.

## Built & Digital Environment

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- Ensure the guide is accessible for people with disability, including people who use screen reader technology.
- Consider whether the guide can accompany any accessible tickets sold, ensuring patrons have the information they need.
- Add instructions to add audio descriptions to be used at events to the Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide for clients hosted on the website.

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### **Action**

**Identify dedicated quiet spaces within the venue (for ICC Sydney team members as well as patrons, guests or delegates attending live and corporate events) and fit them out to include sensory considerations such as sensory tools and dimmable lighting.**

### **Implementation**

- Both permanent and temporary designated quiet spaces are being made available to access for patrons and team members who are neurodiverse in partnership with advisory work by Autism Spectrum Australia.
- Process and protocol documents to be developed to instruct who and how to access and manage the rooms.
- Invest in sensory bags to increase the inclusive experience of ICC Sydney delegates, patrons and guests who may be neurodiverse.

## Built & Digital Environment

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### **Action**

**Increase the representation of people with disability on the websites.**

### **Implementation**

- Collect authentically cast imagery of people with disability to integrate on the ICC Sydney website.
- Ensure people with disability are mentioned in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion page on the website.

## Employment

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### Action

Undertake inclusive recruitment training to create an environment that is equipped for the increased employment of people with disability.

### Implementation

- Identify key recruitment personnel and hiring managers to undertake inclusive recruitment experience.
  - Where possible, ensure training is delivered by people with lived experience of disability.
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### Action

Provide people with a diversity of disability the opportunity to apply to work at ICC Sydney by advertising roles on accessible job platforms and with agencies that have a diverse pool of applicants.

### Implementation

- Recruit on accessible job platforms such as The Field and Jigsaw.
  - Consider engaging with disability employee agencies that work with and support individuals with a wide range of disabilities.
  - On accessible job platforms as well as the ICC Sydney website, publicise that ICC Sydney is open to being flexible in the recruitment process and identify examples of what this could entail.
- 

### Action

Undertake a review of the end-to-end recruitment process with the aim to increase disability inclusion at ICC Sydney.

### Implementation

- Ensure job advertisements include only the 'must haves' of the role and not the 'nice to haves' ensuring people with disability are not unintentionally discriminated against.
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## Employment

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- Ensure job advertisements are detailed, highlighting what will be expected from the candidate, allowing them to make informed decisions from the beginning of the recruitment process.
  - Identify flexible interviewing techniques that can be offered to all people, including people with disability.
  - Identify appropriate methods to ask about access requirements and disability in the recruitment process.
- 

### **Action**

**Review pre-existing psychometric tests and medical forms through a disability lens, ensuring people with disability are not unintentionally discriminated against in the recruitment process.**

### **Implementation**

- Consider whether psychometric testing can be done in multiple formats such as on paper and digitally.
  - Review whether medical forms are required for all roles. Where they are required, ensure the questions asked are only relevant to the specific role the candidate is applying for.
- 

### **Action**

**Create an inclusive statement and ensure it is present within all future job advertisements.**

### **Implementation**

- Ensure inclusive statements are included at the beginning or in the middle of job ads, not at the end, to avoid it being viewed as a tokenistic add on.
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## Employment

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### **Action**

**Ensure bulk recruitment days are inclusive of people with disability.**

### **Implementation**

- Ensure detailed information is provided to job candidates prior to bulk recruitment days regarding the running of the day (e.g., how many people will be in the room, how long it will go for, where it will be located, whether there is access to a quiet space on the day).
- Ensure people are offered the opportunity to request adjustments prior to the day. This may include requesting a 1:1 interview or being provided with the questions ahead of time.

## Systems & Processes

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### **Action**

**Create an inclusive language guide for all team members, including those in the communications team, ensuring the language used is inclusive of people with disability.**

### **Implementation**

- Provide team members with examples of language to use and language to avoid when speaking with people with disability. This includes prioritising person-first language and avoiding outdated terms such as special needs, impairment, and issues.

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### **Action**

**Create a stand-alone reasonable adjustment policy for both team members and managers to follow when there is a reasonable adjustment request.**

### **Implementation**

- Reasonable adjustment policies should include information regarding how a person can request an adjustment, what is considered reasonable, the time frames expected for an adjustment to be applied and Job Access which can be utilised to support the funding of adjustments.
- Review the current requirements that team members need to follow when requesting reasonable adjustments, such as needing a medical certificate, and identify if this is required for all adjustments.
- Ensure casual team members are aware of alternative contacts (such as Human Resources) should they wish to request reasonable adjustments with someone other than their manager. This may mean providing casual team members with access to the organisation chart.



## Systems & Processes

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- Discuss the process of requesting reasonable adjustments during inductions for all team members, including casual team members.
  - Ensure casual team members have access to all ICC Sydney policies from day one of employment.
- 

### **Action**

**Consider the evacuation needs of team members and patrons with disability at ICC Sydney in policies and processes.**

### **Implementation**

- Ensure team members with disability have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) created in case of an emergency.
  - Ensure the evacuation policy for patrons considers the needs of people with disability and is socialised widely across the organisation.
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### **Action**

**Create an accessible communication guide to be used by all departments for internal and external communications.**

### **Implementation**

- Ensure the communication guide follows WCAG standards where appropriate.
  - Ensure the guide includes information about using size 12 font, being mindful of colour contrasting, using appropriate font colours and more (this includes avoiding the use of red text under any circumstances).
  - Ensure alt. text is embedded on all photos/pictures/infographics in communications.
  - Ensure captioning is required for all videos created by ICC including those in communications, on the website, social media, on Buddy (team member intranet site) and more.
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## Systems & Processes

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### **Action**

Add information in the procurement policy which encourages the prioritisations of contracts which consider disability inclusion and access.

### **Implementation**

- Aim to understand the organisation's stance on disability inclusion during the application process, for example, do they employ people with disability or have a DIAP?
  - Consider standardising procurement templates which consider disability inclusion.
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### **Action**

Include increased accessibility considerations in the Client Manual.

### **Implementation**

- Add the Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide to the Client Manual.
  - Ensure important accessibility information has been added to the guide where necessary.
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### **Action**

Create a standalone Atlas (Intranet) page for all policies, procedures, guides and checklists relevant to disability and accessibility allowing for ease of access.

### **Implementation**

- Ensure policies such as the reasonable adjustment policy, assistance animal policy, PEEP forms and flexible work policy are available on the page in Buddy/Atlas.
  - Ensure guides such as the inclusive language guide and accessible communication guide is included on the page in Atlas.
  - Ensure the accessibility guide available for patrons is also available on Buddy/Atlas.
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## Systems & Processes

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### **Action**

To keep ICC Sydney accountable and to support the identification of barriers for team members with disability, add questions relating to disability inclusion to the Engagement and Systems Survey.

### **Implementation**

- Ensure wording around questions creates a safe space and provides the “why” to team members when answering questions. For example, “ICC Sydney is invested in ensuring we can provide you with an environment that allows you to flourish and bring your whole self to work. We therefore have included questions in this survey regarding access needs and disability inclusion. This will allow us to identify gaps in our services and ensure ICC Sydney is an accessible and inclusive place to work for all team members”.



EXPERIENCE WORLD CLASS  
PROUDLY MANAGED BY ASM GLOBAL

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