

# **THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME'S IMPACT ON DISABILITY ARTS IN VICTORIA**



**ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA**

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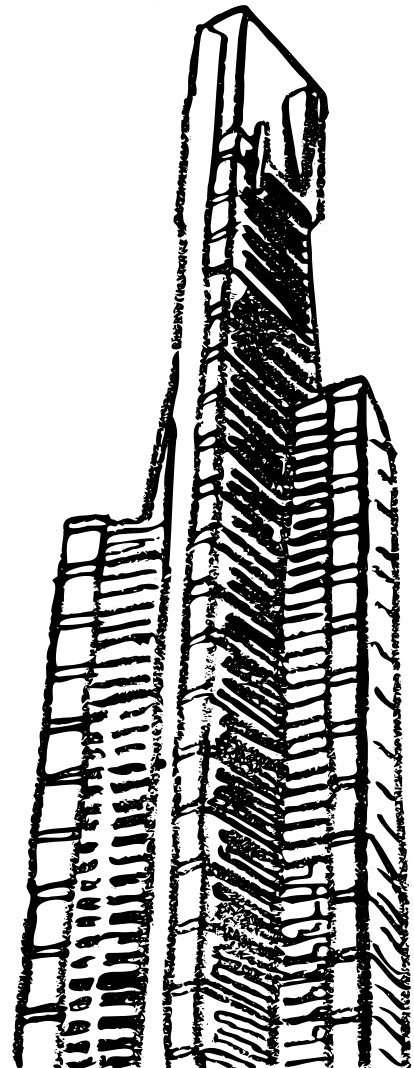


# Understanding the NDIS

## Purpose of the Research

The research project was undertaken to:

1. Understand and document the impact of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) on the operating models of the arts and disability sector in Victoria
2. To investigate a range of operating models that may support current and future activities; and
3. To build capacity in the arts and disability sector to engage with these ideas through documentation and presentation



## Philosophical Overview

Organisations and artists working in the arts and disability sector are extremely aware of two assumptions that they believe are widely made about their work: that arts skills will be 'dumbed down' for Deaf and Disabled people; and that the work produced will be substandard. Ironically, these assumptions are made by some people within the disability support sector **and** within the arts.

Arts as leisure or social engagement have often been provided to Deaf and Disabled People through Community Access Services. As noted by Evans, Bellon and Matthews (2017, p.332)

"In the literature, these services are frequently referred to as 'day programs', 'day activity services', 'adult social care services', 'social programs' or even 'holding centres' which reflects a traditional service-driven structure of segregated services for people with disabilities provided between 9 am and 5 pm from Monday to Friday."

The arts and disability sector rejects this approach. It takes its ethos from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006, Article 30: "People with disability have the same right to take part in cultural life as other people do...to make it possible for people with disability to develop and use their creative, artistic and intellectual abilities, not only for their own benefit but for the benefit of society."

The UK journalist Colin Hambrook observed that: "In the UK, Disability Arts has sprung from a political lobby pushing to counter discrimination. In Australia, the aspiration - beyond a community arts ethos - has been to create work which can stand critically alongside 'mainstream' Art ... As such, it could be argued that it isn't Disability Arts at all if we understand Disability Arts as an art form with the intention of directly challenging discrimination of disabled people." (Austin, 2015, p.12)

The result in Victoria is an ethos that stresses quality arts practice and provides professional pathways for Deaf and Disabled artists.

The philosophy of the NDIS is based on the social model of disability. The social model argues that negative perceptions, systemic barriers and exclusion (rather than physical, intellectual or psychological limitations) are the main causes of disability. The NDIS aims to remove those causes through an insurance-based, market-driven mechanism.

At the philosophical level, the disability arts movement and NDIS are in accord.

Yet a number of the organisations interviewed believe that a medical model of disability is still partially employed under the NDIS. The medical model considers that disability and its social effects are the responsibility of the individual.





Organisations interviewed for this report raised concerns about the poor fit between the goal-oriented, outcome-based approach of the NDIS, and arts programs and artists.

“ NDIS is pushing the program in a therapeutic direction at the expense of the arts side, as they need to justify it as “reasonable and necessary as a mental health support”. It’s almost like we need two streams to the program, one therapeutic and one artistic. ”

— Interview, Anonymous

“ Everywhere these people go it’s like: What’s your goal? ... We’re in a space where it’s not about getting something right and achieving a goal, it’s about your own internal stuff. It’s your journey, not about a goal being on a piece of paper and approved by somebody else. ”

— Interview, BAM All Stars

Arts Access Australia argues that most arts programs rely on recreational supports within the NDIS, which does not reflect the professionalism of Deaf and Disabled artists. Nor does it reflect their desire for employment in the arts. (Bennison, 2015). In this article, AAA argues that the NDIS needs an additional support cluster for management of artistic supports. The arts are not specifically addressed by the NDIS.

Arts Project Australia, which assists artists to apply for employment supports reported that “We generally get 40% success for the employment supports line item.” (Arts Project Australia, Interview).



# An Overview of the National Disability Insurance Scheme

## Individual Support Plans

The NDIS provides people aged under 65, who have permanent and significant disability, with funding for supports and services. The NDIS is administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The NDIS has been rapidly rolled out across Australia in the last five years.

The NDIS is a significant shift from the previous model, where block funding was provided to organisations, who then provided services to Deaf and Disabled people free of charge or at very low cost.

Under the NDIS, funding is provided to an individual, who may then use it for agreed purposes. These agreed purposes are called **supports**. The **supports** available under the NDIS are set out in the [NDIS Support Catalogue](#). The Catalogue also provides maximum hourly rates that can be charged for each support by organisations providing service to participants in the NDIS.

The Catalogue is interpreted through [Operational Guidelines](#) that govern what the NDIS will and will not pay for. (In the context of the arts, it is important to note that these **supports** explicitly exclude course fees. A person can, for example, receive funding for transport to a course, or for a support worker to help them at the course, but not to pay for the course itself.)

Some NDIS Participants may have social and community activity costs charged to their NDIS package (Support Item: 04\_115\_0125\_6\_1) where the activity directly relates to the participant's goals and if the person is at risk of social isolation or where it can be demonstrated that a participant cannot afford the expense related to the activity and the consequence of not paying would result in them not attending leading to increased social isolation.

This can also be charged when the person is trying new recreational pursuits; and engaging in broader community participation but needs to be specified in the person's plan wherever possible as an annual support cost.

The individual receives a Disability Support Plan that allocates set amounts that are available to be spent on each **support** covered by the Plan.

The NDIS is intended to create a broad market in services for Deaf and Disabled people. In 2017-18, the NDIS committed \$7.7 billion to individual supports, and participants managed to spend \$4.9 billion of that amount. (NDIA, 2018)





The ratio of the amount spent to the amount committed is called the **utilisation rate**. In 2017-18 the utilisation rate was 64%. (NDIA 2018). It is a key indicator of whether services are available, as well as an indicator of whether Deaf and Disabled people are able to access services that are there.

There were 172,333 active participants as at 30 June 2018, and when it is fully rolled out, the NDIS will be supporting an estimated 460,000 participants.

## Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grants

[Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grants](#) sit alongside individual funding under the NDIS.

"The objective of the program is to provide funding to organisations to assist them to connect people with disability to their community. ILC refers to the set of activities focused on:

- Personal capacity building: Making sure people with disability have the skills, confidence and resources to participate in their community, and access the same opportunities and services as other people.
- Community capacity building: Building the capacity of the community to include people with disability, including mainstream services and community organisations."

Unlike the rest of the NDIS, ILC does not provide funding to participants. Instead, it provides grants to organisations to deliver activities in the community, benefiting Deaf and Disabled people and their families. The NDIA distributes grants through funding rounds to organisations to carry out activities in the community that relate to any of the four activity areas in ILC policy:

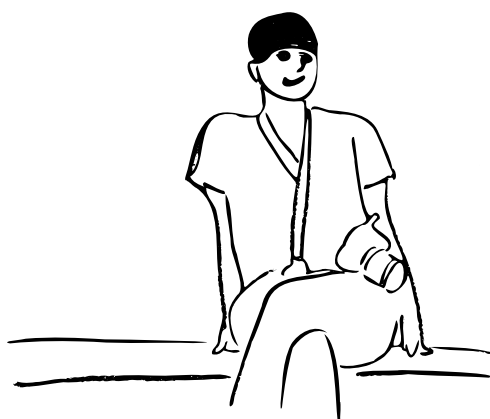
- Information, linkages and referrals
- Community awareness and capacity building
- Mainstream capacity building, and
- Individual capacity building.

95 grants were issued in 2017-18, for a total value of \$72M (NDIA 2019). They have a budget of \$400 million over the next three years.



Disability arts organisations can apply for ILC grants and have been successful in obtaining the following funding which represent 2% of the total amount allocated:

ILC Grant	Announcement Date	Total Available	Amount provided to the Arts	Percentage of Total
National Information Program	11 October 2019	\$65 million	\$0	0%
Economic Participation of People with Disability	31 July 2019	\$19.6 Million	\$924,471.90	5%
Disabled Peoples and Families Organisations	July 2019	\$15.5 Million	\$557,079.94	4%
ILC Rural and Remote Grant Round	July 2018	\$9.3 Million		0%
Round 2 ILC Jurisdictional Grants ACT, NSW and South Australia 2017 – 2018	April 2018	\$28.5 Million	\$938,264.07	3%
Round 1 ILC National Readiness Grants 2016 – 2017	July 2017	\$14 Million	\$0	0%
Round 1 ILC Jurisdictional Based Grants ACT 2016 – 2017	July 2017	\$3 Million	\$74,069	2%
Total		\$154.9 Million	\$2,493,885	2%



The Economic Participation ILC grant round committed \$19.6 Million (GST Incl.) to 64 organisations to deliver one-year projects from August 2019. The objective of the ILC Economic Participation for People with Disability grant round is to improve the economic participation of Deaf and Disabled people across Australia. There were four arts based organisations that received funding under this initiative totally \$924,471.90. The organisations included the following:

- Bus Stop Films Ltd
- Darwin Community Arts Incorporated
- Back to Back Theatre Inc.
- Tutti Arts Incorporated

(See Appendix for further detail)

The Disabled Peoples and Families Organisations (DPFO) grant round has committed \$15.5 Million (GST Incl.) to 114 organisations and 13 cohort group organisations to deliver one-year projects from July 2019. These grants will strengthen the foundations of the DPFO sector in time for the new approach for ILC grants as outlined in the ILC Investment Strategy, when we will see four nationally scalable programs that will deliver measurable outcomes for Deaf and Disabled people. Five arts focused organisations received funding totally \$557,079.94 including the following:

- Accessible Arts
- Auspicious Arts Projects Inc (Auspice: DeafBlind Victoria)
- Indel Ability Arts Ltd
- Tutti Arts Incorporated (Auspice: Sit Down Shut up And Watch)
- Rebus Theatre

(See Appendix for further detail)

The 2017 – 2018 Round 2 ILC Jurisdictional Grants ACT, NSW and South Australia provided more than \$28.5 million over two years to deliver 104 activities (A total of 55 activities are to be delivered in NSW, 32 in SA and 17 in the ACT). There was a total of \$938,264.07 allocated over two years to arts based or focused organisations including the NSW organisation Eastern Riverina Arts which received \$588,280 and one South Australian organisation Bardic Studio (\$35,000) and three ACT organisations Rebus Theatre (\$199,984), Accessible Arts (\$102,500) and Bardic Studio- ACT (\$12,500)

(See Appendix for further detail)

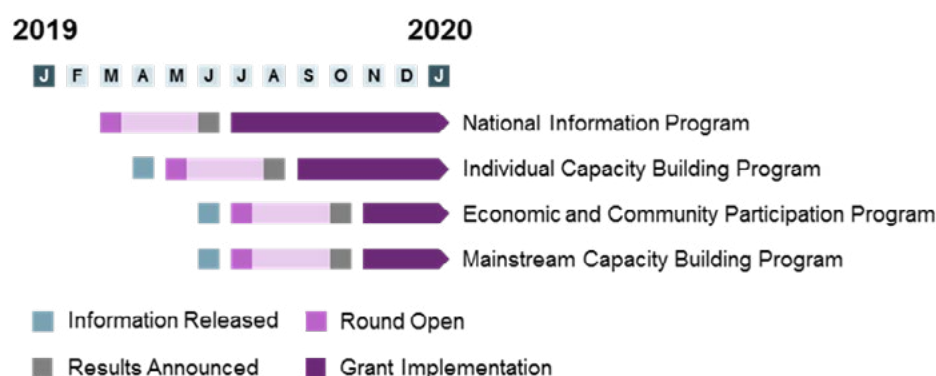
The 2016 – 2017 Round 1 ILC Jurisdictional Based Grants ACT provided a total of 64 grants to organisations to deliver ILC projects. Up to \$3 million was available. Rebus Theatre Incorporated received a grant of \$74,069 for a project - Open Doors Open Minds will be a series of interactive, disability-led capacity-building workshops for Community Organisations.



The success of these arts-based programs in obtaining ILC grants demonstrates that the NDIS does value the contribution of the arts and perhaps has an interest in supporting this further. A brief analysis of the projects funded identified the following key themes which are of course aligned to the objectives of the grants that were made available at the time:

- **Individual capacity building:** career planning, skill development to find work and facilitation of employment in the arts
- **Community capacity building:** to support the inclusion of disability artists in the mainstream art sector, promotion of individual artists work through screenings and exhibitions
- **Economic Participation:** training programs aimed at employers, workplace placements, development of disability actions plans
- **Arts Organisation Capacity Building:** improved governance, development of policies and procedures, marketing and business plans, implementation of software, skill development in leadership and governance by Deaf and Disabled people

The ILC Strategy Towards 2020 notes that new funding opportunities will be available to organisations for each new ILC program during 2019-2020, with horizons to 2021-22. The anticipated timelines are detailed below<sup>1</sup>:



Individual Capacity Building Program closed on Monday 30 September 2019. This included up to \$100 million (GST Excl) over three years for programs and activities that support Deaf and Disabled people to:

- have the skills and confidence to participate in and contribute to the community and protect their rights
- feel motivated, confident and empowered to act
- participate in and benefit from the same community activities as everyone else.

Mainstream Capacity Building Program (Health) and Economic and Community Participation Program closed on Monday 21 October 2019.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ndis.gov.au/community/information-linkages-and-capacity-building-ilc/ilc-investment-strategy>



## The NDIS process for an individual artist

To access the NDIS, a Deaf and Disabled person must first complete an application that tests their eligibility to the Scheme then meet with an NDIA Planner to self-advocate for the services they wish to receive. The individual can be accompanied to the planning meeting by someone to assist them. The Planner then recommends a Plan (consisting of **supports** and amounts allocated) to the NDIA. The NDIA reviews and frequently modifies that Plan without further consultation with the artist.

To get an optimal result, an artist needs the Planner and the NDIA to be aware of the arts, and sympathetic to their aspirations.

The NDIS only funds reasonable and necessary supports that will help participants to:

- pursue their goals, objectives and aspirations
- increase their independence
- increase community and workplace participation, and
- develop their capacity to actively take part in the community.

Consequently, the first task confronting an artist is to convince an NDIS Planner that the arts are both **reasonable** and **necessary**. The Operational Guidelines do not mention the arts at all (NDIA, 2019).

Arts Access Victoria is aware of this issue, and has prepared tools, resources, information, workshops and one-on-one support in a range of accessible formats for artists to help them self-advocate, and for families, support networks, art organisations and support coordinators to raise their awareness of the arts services and employment opportunities available. A number of the organisations interviewed for this report regularly send workers to planning meetings to help artists self-advocate, even though this service is not funded by the NDIS.

The individual then receives their Plan. If they do not believe the Plan satisfies the support that they requested, they can ask for a review. The review process is, however, lengthy and often takes almost as long as the 12 months that each plan is in force (Interview, Arts Project Australia).





## How the money is managed

Once an individual receives their Plan, they can decide to manage it in a number of ways. Each method has effects on the services they can subsequently receive, and on which organisations they can receive the services from.

The person can choose to self-manage their NDIS Funding package, access a Plan Manager with additional funding including in their package or choose to have their funding managed by the NDIA on the myPlace portal. NDIS Participants can decide to manage all or just some of their package through any of these three options.

Only providers who have registered with the NDIS can provide services to people whose funds are NDIA managed. People who use a Plan Manager, or who are self-managed, can choose to use unregistered service providers.

### **NDIA Managed**

The Plan is managed by the NDIA on behalf of the individual

#### **Pros**

The individual does not have to undertake any financial administration

#### **Cons**

Services can only be provided by organisations registered with the NDIS

No services can be provided by unregistered providers

### **Plan Managed**

A Plan Manager can be funded as part of an individual's plan and must be an NDIS registered provider. The Plan Manager takes care of the financial administration on behalf of the participant.

#### **Pros**

The plan manager:

- claims directly from the NDIS to pay providers on the individual's behalf.
- keeps track of funds;
- takes care of financial reporting
- can also help people choose providers
- the individual can use both registered and unregistered providers



## **Self-managed**

The participant manages all aspects of their Plan and associated funding themselves.

### **Pros**

- Use any provider (registered or unregistered)
- Capacity to employ or contract staff directly, or have someone employ staff on your behalf.
- Ability to negotiate the costs
- Control over NDIS funding

### **Cons**

- The individual has to manage claiming and paying for supports by making payment requests, and by paying for their supports on time.
- Keeping invoices and receipts.
- Meeting obligations as an employer (if staff are employed directly)
- Showing how funding contributed towards reaching the participant's goals at the plan review.

Based on interviews conducted by Fiona Cook (previously NDIS Project Manager for Arts Access Victoria) many people are finding this overwhelming and there is a high percentage of self-managed plans that are not being activated due to these factors.

The Plan can also be split, with some Support Items managed in one way, and others in a different way. Fiona Cook has found that the most common example is people who are NDIA managed separating some funds to be self-managed so they can access services by a non-registered provider. This allows them to access arts-related services provided by organisations that are not NDIS registered.

## **Current state of play**

The proportion of approved plans that are self-managed (either fully or partly) has increased over the last two years, from 19% of plans approved in the quarter to June 2017 to 29% of plans approved in the quarter to June 2019, and the proportion of participants who have a plan manager has increased from 13% to 34% (NDIS 2019)<sup>2</sup>

It is clear that the number of people accessing services from unregistered providers is increasing, both in absolute numbers as the NDIS rolls out, and as a percentage of NDIS participants.

The NDIS considers that self-management is a key indicator of participant choice and control, as participants can opt for bespoke or innovative supports outside of the specialist disability services and negotiate their own prices and is actively promoting self-management to its participants.

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2 June 2019 | COAG Disability Reform Council Quarterly Report p7. <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/publications/quarterly-reports>



## NDIS process for an organisation

### To Register or not to Register

From the perspective of an arts organisation wanting to provide services to Deaf and Disabled people, the first question that needs to be answered is whether it is financially practicable to register as an NDIS provider.

This requires an upfront investment of approximately \$5,000-\$10,000 to establish a quality system to meet the NDIS Quality and Safeguard Practice Standards for NDIS registered providers and an annual cost of third-party auditing of a similar scale.

"There is also ongoing maintenance of the quality system required which can equate to approximately 1-2 days per week depending on the size of the organisation." (Pfeiffer 2018, p.3)

Both Arts Access and Arts Project Australia (which operate at the larger end of the scale, reported that they had spent more than \$50,000 on the initial administrative systems required to comply with the NDIS, and that the additional administrative burden was the equivalent of between one and two full-time positions.

Disability support organisations wanting to provide arts programs will generally be registered already to the Victorian Human Services Standards, National Disability Services Standards and/or ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System Standards and have to transition to the NDIS Practice Standards from 1/7/19.

The type of service provider registration determines the percentage of NDIS participants who can be reached by the service. A registered provider can provide services to 100% of NDIS recipients. The numbers of participants that are either self-managing or using a Plan Manager suggest that an unregistered arts organisation would be able to meet the needs of at least 67% of NDIS participants (either fully or partly).



Registered providers must meet requirements on qualifications, approvals, experience and capacity, and they must be registered for each Support Item that they provide. Wayne Pfeiffer, from PfA Consults, an experienced consultant working on NDIS projects, reported to Artswest that:

“To be fully NDIS registered each organisation needs to meet the following requirements:

- Meet suitability requirements based on the NDIS Support Category
- Successful completion of DHHS and NDIS disability service provider registration
- Establish and maintain a Quality Management System within the first year of registration including DHHS Victorian Human Services Standards & Governance Standards of either:
  - ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System or
  - National Standards for Disability Services
- Meet the NDIS Terms of Business requirements and any professional qualifications and membership of a relevant professional bodies if required”  
(Pfeiffer, 2018)

From the 1/7/19 these providers must now meet the requirements of the NDIS Practice Standards and complete a self-assessment developing systems including for the reporting of incidents and complaints and other requirements as outlined by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) is an independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. They regulate NDIS providers, provide national consistency, promote safety and quality services, resolve problems and identify areas for improvement.

The NDIS Commission operates in all Australian states and territories except Western Australia. The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) will continue to manage provider registrations in Western Australia until the NDIS Commission begins operating in WA on 1 July, 2020.



Registered NDIS providers in the states and territories where the NDIS Commission operates must:

- comply with the conditions of registration stated on certification of registration
- demonstrate compliance with the NDIS Practice Standards for relevant registration groups (which are determined by the types of services and supports delivered), including through a quality audit
- comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct and support employees to meet its requirements
- have an in-house complaints management and resolution system to record and manage any complaints, and support NDIS participants or other relevant concerned parties to make a complaint
- have an in-house incident management system, and notify the NDIS Commission should a reportable incident occur
- fulfil worker screening requirements and ensure all workers have been screened
- if applicable, meet the behaviour support requirements, including reporting the use of restrictive practices to the NDIS Commission.
- All workers of registered NDIS providers must complete a worker orientation e-learning module called 'Quality, Safety and You', that covers human rights, respect, risk, and the roles and responsibilities of NDIS workers.<sup>3</sup>

Interviewees from NDIS registered disability service organisations reported that the NDIS imposed significant administrative costs.

However, organisations can provide services to people receiving NDIS funding without being a registered NDIS provider. Deaf and Disabled people who manages their own Plan, or who uses a Plan/Financial Manager can use services from an unregistered provider (NDIS 2017). Unregistered providers must still adhere to the [NDIS Code of Conduct](#), which imposes obligations relating to staff training, privacy and record-keeping

## **Charging, profit margin & bureaucratic knowledge**

The amount that can be charged for supports under the NDIS is governed by a maximum price set through the [NDIS Price Guide](#) and the [NDIS Support Catalogue](#). The Guide is a complicated document that sets out the rules for billing. The deceptively named Support Catalogue is a 61-page detailed table that sets out how much can be charged per hour for each support. In essence, the two documents create a set of bureaucratic rules that need to be learned and adhered to by any arts organisation wanting to provide services under the NDIS.

For example, under the NDIS, it is not simply the case of a Deaf and Disabled people

<sup>3</sup> NDIS Commission Registered provider requirements: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/registered-provider-requirements>





participating in a project and being charged like any other participant. The NDIS does not usually cover these kinds of participation fees. Instead the arts organisation will need to bill against a **Support**, such as **Innovative Community Participation**.

Individuals who are managed by the NDIA or who have a Plan Manager cannot pay more than the hourly amount shown in the NDIS Price List for *supports*, regardless of whether the provider is registered or unregistered. (NDIA 2018a). People who are self-managed can choose to pay more or less in the case of an unregistered provider.

In practice, however, providers are restricted to the NDIS price cap, unless they are prepared to charge more to self-managed participants than they charge to NDIA or Plan Managed clients.

A key difference between NDIA Managed participants and the other two categories is in how they are invoiced. NDIA managed participants cannot be charged for services in advance, only in arrears. They cannot be charged at all if they cancel with sufficient notice. Registered organisations can charge NDIS managed participants through the specialised **myplace Portal**.



# RESEARCH RESULTS

## Research process

This section of the report is based on an online survey of disability arts providers and fifteen individual, semi-structured telephone interviews conducted by Alex Prior. Interviewees were given the option of anonymity. Six interviewees chose anonymity. A detailed analysis was also undertaken using available information from websites and publicly available literature. Thanks are due to Weave Movement Theatre and Arts West, who made available research undertaken by NDIS consultant Wayne Pfeiffer, PFA Consults as part of two separate projects. This research was invaluable in broadening the contemporary information available for this report.

During 2018 and 2019, in her role as NDIS Project Manager for Arts Access Victoria, Fiona Cook undertook 24 workshops for organisations and Deaf and Disabled people across regional and metropolitan Victoria. These Connecting the Dots workshops were supported by an Information, Linkages and Capacity-building grant, and were intended to assist people to advocate for the arts as part of the NDIS. The interviews and questionnaires conducted during these workshops provided valuable information on the state of the NDIS and the arts. Information from these workshops has been incorporated into the report.



## Statistical Overview

### Number and type of programs

This report identified 267 disability arts programs in Victoria, being run by 79 organisations. There are almost certainly more being offered by Neighbourhood Houses and local government. 41 (52%) of providers are registered with the NDIS.

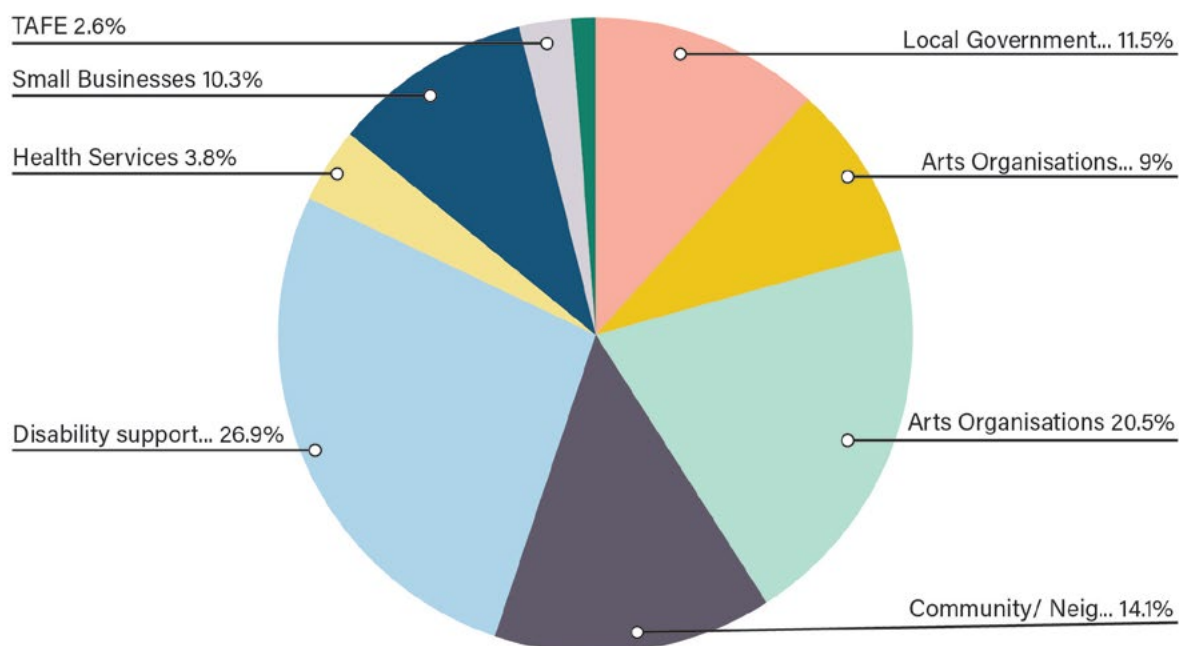
Most programs offered a group workshops (for visual arts) or ensembles combining training and moving towards performance (for performing arts). Visual arts and theatre (with some dance and music) predominate, and many programs aim to culminate in a public performance or exhibition.

Where information is available, almost all of the programs emphasise the acquisition of professional skills in the arts. As discussed above, health and social benefits are acknowledged, but are seen as secondary.

Fiona Cook noted, however, that when individuals were asked the question: "What does art mean in your life?" as part of the Connecting the Dots workshops, the responses skewed heavily towards personal health and well-being. Rather than seeing professional development or health as being either / or outcomes, Deaf and Disabled artists see the health benefits of the arts as a precursor that then enables their professional development.



## Organisational structures



Local Government (incl arts & community arts centres)	9
Arts Organisations (Not Disability Specific)	7
Arts Organisations (Disability Specific)	16
Community / Neighbourhood Houses	11
Disability Support Services	21
Health Services	3
Small businesses	8
TAFE	2
Other	1

The organisations running disability arts programs are diverse. There is no typical model.

**Disability Support Services & Health Services:** The largest group are Disability Support Services. These organisations run arts programs as part of a broader suite of disability services including health, housing, employment and transport. They tend to run multiple programs simultaneously, and employ at least one person in a part or full-time coordinating role. This group has already lost (or is about to lose) core block funding from State government as they move to the NDIS and individualised funding. All of these organisations are registered NDIS providers.

**Neighbourhood Houses:** Neighbourhood Houses are probably both overrepresented and underrepresented in the table. The Houses identified each run one or two programs (rather than a suite), but it is also unlikely that this report identifies all of the Houses that are running disability arts programs.



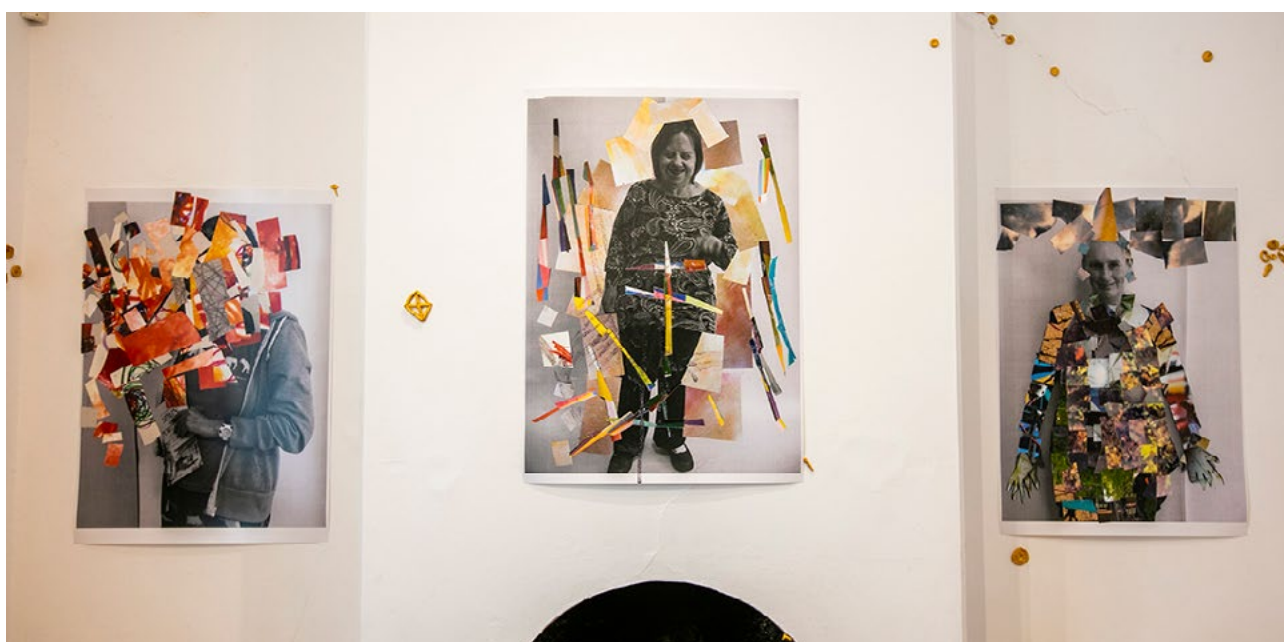


The Victorian Government's Department of Health and Human Services provides core funding to more than 90% of the state's Neighbourhood Houses through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (\$25 million per annum). This funding will continue after transition to the NDIS. Other sources of income include the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, local government, the federal government, and funds generated by Neighbourhood Houses themselves.

**Disability Specific Arts Organisations:** Arts organisations that specifically serve Deaf and Disabled people range from medium-sized (\$2 million plus turnover) such as Arts Project Australia to the very small (less than \$100,000). Of these 15 organisations, 6 have registered as NDIS Providers (Arts Access, Arts Project Australia, Back to Back Theatre, BEAM, emotion.21, Sunraysia, YourDNA). With the exception of BEAM and Sunraysia, these are the five largest disability arts organisations. The larger (by income) disability arts organisations have relied on a mix of arts funding and block grants from the Victorian Government's Department of Health and Human Services disability services funding and is now in transition to the NDIS market model.

**Local Government:** As with Neighbourhood Houses, it is unlikely that this report has captured all of the disability arts activities run by local government. The nine local government programs identified were run from within other council services for either youth (Banyule) or by arts or community arts centres. The majority of councils have chosen not to become registered NDIS providers. The majority of disability arts programs identified are drawing their funding from non-disability funding lines (eg arts) within council.

**Small Businesses:** The report identified eight small businesses providing disability arts services. These are one-person, unfunded operations employing one or two casual staff in addition to the business owner. Only one is a registered NDIS provider.





## Geographical Distribution



Disability arts programs are clustered in Melbourne, and unevenly distributed across the state. Their distribution across the Metropolitan area, is also uneven. This is also true at the artform level, with not all areas having access to all artforms.

The Victorian areas with the highest concentration of working age Deaf and Disabled adults are Maryborough (7.5%), Upper Yarra Valley (10.5%), Morwell (7.8%), Campbellfield - Coolaroo (7.7%) and Meadow Heights (8.2%). (Zhou, Qingsheng 2016)

Although a full study of geographic distribution and market opportunities was outside the scope of this study, a preliminary study clearly shows that the he distribution of disability arts programs does not match the distribution of Deaf and Disabled people with access to NDIS Funding. Further work could be undertaken to discover any disability arts programs in the areas of high concentration of disability. If these do not exist, then there is likely to be unmet demand in these areas. This would be facilitated by the excellent NDIS Demand Map which, while it does identify the number NDIS participants in each area, is not useful in estimating demand for arts programs.

Using only headline data from the NDIS Demand Map, the preliminary study showed at least three heavily underserviced areas. The NDIS Demand Map uses postcodes as its primary unit. Postcodes do not map perfectly to local government areas. All data is based on the NDIS' 2020-23 projections. This preliminary study simply looked at the three postcodes with highest demand, at the local government area into which they fell, and at the existing services. It looked only at total demand. It did not attempt to map the accessibility of disability arts programs outside the specified postcodes based on accessible transport.



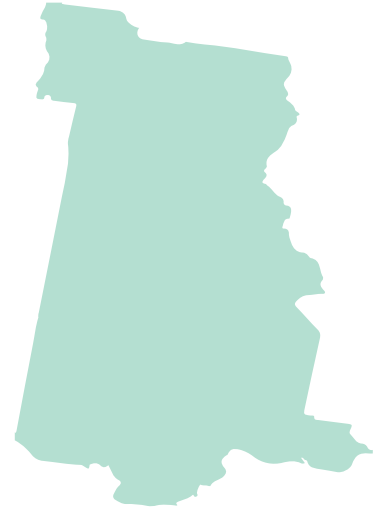
## City of Casey

Postcodes 3975, 3976, 3977, 3978, 3980, 3805 and 3912 fall largely or entirely within the City of Casey, on Greater Melbourne's southern fringe. They cover suburbs such as Cranbourne and Botanic Ridge. Postcode 3977 (Cranbourne, Cranbourne East, Cranbourne West, Cranbourne North, Cranbourne South, Cannons Creek) has a projected 1,783 NDIS recipients, receiving \$68 million in NDIS supports.

Together, the seven postcodes are projected to have between 4,531 and 5,337 NDIS recipients, receiving between \$150 million and \$183 million in supports. Of this amount, between \$40 million and \$47 million will be allocated to support items that could potentially be accessed for disability arts activities.

This large cluster is currently only directly served by two disability arts programs - weekly, one-hour e.motion21 dance classes, and three weekly music sessions by D Mark, a microbusiness.

Arguably, residents of this zone might be able to access services in Frankston (Arts Access and BAM) in the east, or Fusion 21 in Dandenong to the north. The paucity of services is, however, striking.



## City of Wyndham

Postcodes 3026, 3027, 3028, 3029, 3030, 3211 fall largely within the City of Wyndham on Melbourne's southwest. They cover suburbs such as Werribee and Truganina.

Together the postcodes are expected to have between 2,157 and 2,771 NDIS recipients, with total supports of between \$150 and \$196 million. Of this amount between \$53 and \$66 million will be allocated to support items that could potentially be accessed for disability arts activities.

This cluster is only supported by e.motion21 dance workshops at Hoppers Crossing.



## City of Hume

Postcodes 3047, 3048, 3049, 3061, 3062, 3063, 3064, 3428 and 3429 fall largely within the City of Hume. They cover the outer section of Broadmeadows, as well as suburbs such as Craigieburn. 3064 is expected to have 1,748 NDIS recipients, receiving \$54 million in total supports.

Together, the postcodes will have between 2,133 and 2,946 NDIS recipients, receiving a total between \$114 and \$161 million in supports. Of this amount between \$44 and \$58 million will be allocated to support items that could potentially be accessed for disability arts activities.

This large cluster is supported by a disability hip hop program for children with an intellectual disability run by Hume City Council, a visual arts workshop at Banksia Gardens Community Centre, and on the far east by Sunbury Community Health's BoilOver Performance Ensemble.

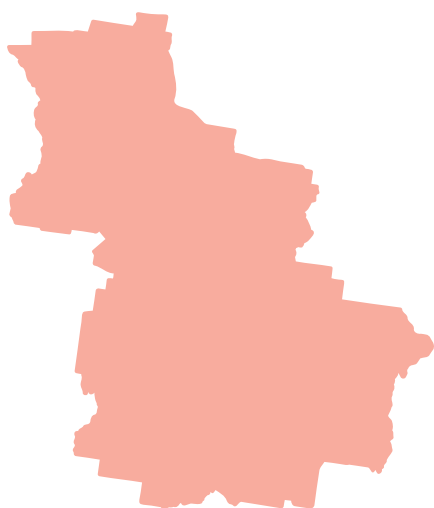


## Central Goldfields Shire

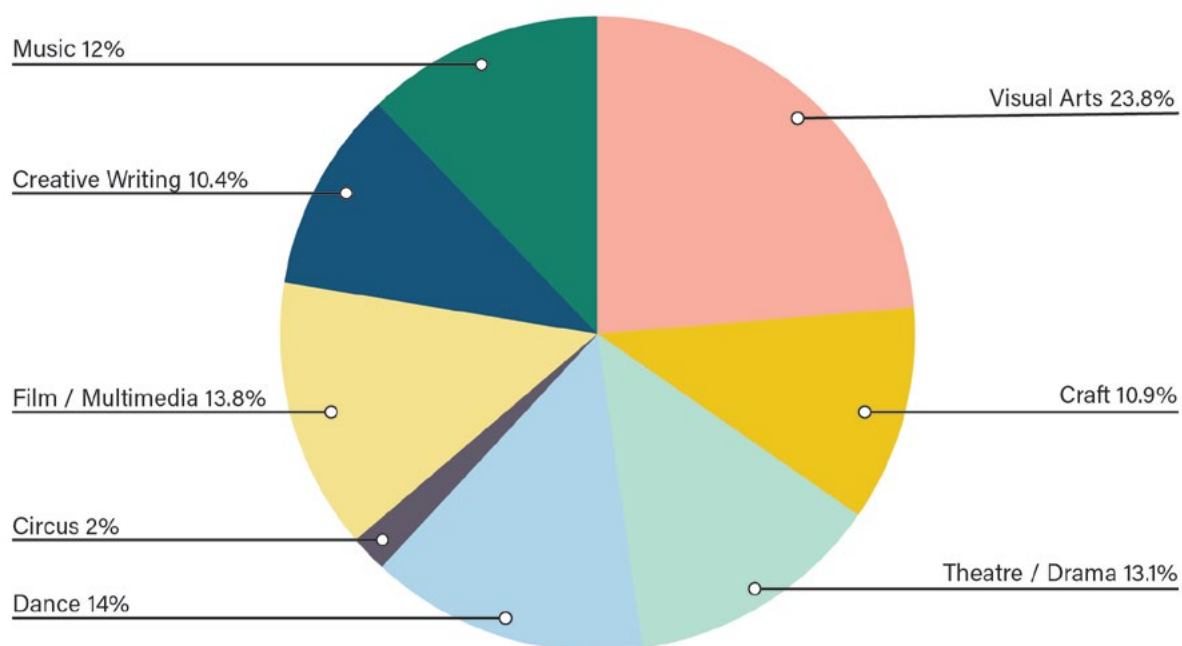
Postcodes 3364, 3365, 3370, 3371, 3465, 3472, 3475 fall largely within the Central Goldfields Shire based around the town of Maryborough.

Together the postcodes are expected to have between 441 and 759 NDIS recipients, receiving a total of between \$31 and \$51 million in supports. Of this amount, between \$11 and \$14 million will be allocated to support items that could potentially be accessed for disability arts activities.

Asteria, the local disability services provider, includes "art, craft and pottery groups" and photography as part of its centre based activities. It recently organised an exhibition of residents' work. There are no other disability arts services in the area.



## Art forms covered



Visual arts and performing arts account for the majority of programs on offer to Deaf and Disabled people.



## Impact of the NDIS - individual artists

### Random nature of planning outcomes in the arts & subjectivity of Planners

Deaf and Disabled Artists have benefited from guidelines for self-advocacy developed by both Arts Access and Arts Project Australia. Both of these organisations have developed approaches for arguing that arts practice was both reasonable and necessary under the NDIS. (Arts Access 2019)

People interviewed for this research, and artists at the Connecting the Dots workshops, have nevertheless reported that the results have been highly variable. Given similar circumstances, individuals receive very different outcomes in their Plans. The view from the field is that without guidance around the arts, the personal opinions of Planners play a large role in determining the outcomes.

Planners are supported in determining what is reasonable and necessary by the NDIS [Operational Guidelines](#), however these make no mention of the arts, and interviewees reported that as a result, the outcome is often determined by the Planners' perceptions and knowledge.

**“** I have seen people in real need get nothing, and people with far less need get a lot. I can't see a reason, but I think the Planners are somewhat lacking in personal experience, so it depends on the Planner that people get, and how much they value art. **”**

— Interview, Anonymous

This view from within the arts is supported by broader academic research carried out by the University of Melbourne, which concluded that: “Administrative issues appeared to be compounded by staffing issues, including staff shortages, high turnover of staff and staff working as planners with limited experience of working in the disability sector.” (Warr, D, *et al.* 2017)

### Lengthy review process

If a participant disagrees with the plan that they are given, the review process is lengthy.

Arts Project Australia explained the situation this way: “If they don't get the funding, we have learned not to run around chasing our tails and asking for a review. By the time the review happens, they are up to a new plan. The review process is broken. 3 months is the minimum for the first review. The first review is unlikely to produce a different outcome. Then there's 3 months for a review of a review. And a plan only lasts a year. The NDIS is recognising that.”





## Short plans

NDIS Plans last for one year, and are reviewed annually. The annual review can vary the amount of money available, as well as adding or removing entire support categories. Interviewees and artists attending the Connecting the Dots workshops reported that this annual review created high levels of anxiety, as people worried about retaining their arts supports. This was especially true where a lack of services in regional areas meant that the participant had been unable to use their entire budget. This could be interpreted by Planners as evidence that the support was not necessary.

From feedback elicited during the Connecting the Dots workshops, Fiona Cook reported that, anecdotally, participants had achieved success in the annual review process when arts organisations provided reports that detailed the benefits for the individual.



## Families and networks matter

All of the interviewees reported that families, social networks and the support available from advocacy organisations are vital in achieving a successful outcome from the NDIS. Interviewees reported that the level of education — or the level of education available within a person's social network - made huge differences to funding outcomes.

**“** Well you know there's people in every column. The majority are a lot better off. There's a number where we have had to be the advocate because there's nobody in their corner. There's a number of parents who don't have the capacity to cope, and we have had to support them. So there's been a spectrum of outcomes, and this is still occurring. It is getting better, but all of the kinks have not been ironed out. **”**

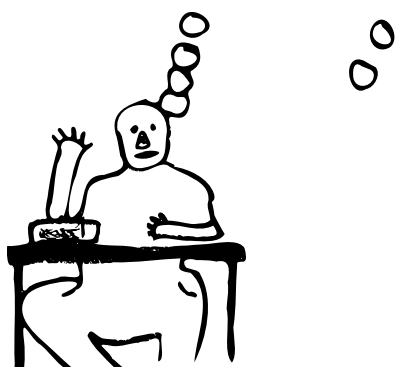
— Interview, Anonymous

**“** This network effect is pronounced in regional Victoria. [We have] since realised, unless your plan is NDIA managed, you can pretty much use the money how you want, even if the person is not a provider. **”**

— Interview, Anonymous

This anecdotal information from within the arts and disability sector is supported by academic research into the general impact of the NDIS:

“The implications of issues noted above suggest that insufficient attention is being paid to promoting equity of outcomes among service users with diverse needs and circumstances. Factors that are well-recognised in driving inequality – household income, education, residential location and household structure – remain critical in filtering opportunities and capacities for service users and their carers to have choice and control in accessing services and resources under the NDIS. ” (Warr, D et al 2017, p.9)



## A therapeutic model in tension with creativity and a career

One recurrent theme from the interviews with arts organisations (both NDIS registered and unregistered) is a philosophical one - the tension between the goals-based, highly structured model of the NDIS, and arts practice.

A number of interviewees also saw the NDIS as unconsciously favouring a therapeutic model, rather than understanding the professional attitude of Deaf and Disabled artists.

**“** The lack of logic [in NDIS decisions] is really very much a misunderstanding about art as a career or art as employment. 99% of times a person with an intellectual disability goes to art, it is about a daycare service. And that's what people in the disability industry think about art. For a lot of people, that suits very well, but not for Arts Project Australia. Many of our people are driven artists. They [the NDIA] talk about employment, but not about a person having a career trajectory. **”**

— Arts Project Australia

**“** NDIS is pushing the program in a therapeutic direction at the expense of the arts side, as they need to justify it as “reasonable and necessary as a mental health support”. It's almost like we need two streams to the program, one therapeutic and one artistic. **”**

— All Abilities

Research undertaken by the University of Melbourne identifies these issues with the NDIS as being prevalent among all NDIS recipients. “Many participants felt that their capacities to exercise ‘choice and control’ were undermined by assessments that their requests were not reasonable or necessary without clear notions of what this actually meant. Planning and approval processes relied heavily on professional advice provided by physio-, occupational and speech therapists, over the opinions of carers and families, although these professional assessments also appeared to be frequently disregarded in decision-making processes within the NDIA.” (Warr, D et al 2017, p.31)





## The NDIS has opened up possibilities for one-on-one work

Currently, disability arts programs are largely delivered as group workshops and classes, or ensemble pieces. And they are delivered over the long term, with many programs running on an annual basis.

The NDIS, however, is now opening up the possibility of programs where artists can benefit from one-to-one support to achieve their goals, or from short-term tailored programs designed to deliver individual outcomes.

"We might do more one-on-ones as people have funding; they have more choice. We have quite a few people who do want the one-on-one, and that's probably a really great thing if we can provide that, and a great benefit to the artist. Some of these can be quite short term, for example, the mentor went to Melbourne with the artist, and built confidence with the artist who now goes to Melbourne for the art galleries by themselves"

"To be able to do one off things as well as mentoring is really exciting." (Arthur Creative Services)

Arts Access Victoria is also pursuing one-on-one mentoring through NDIS funding, and are seeing real demand for one to one support in general.



## Impact of the NDIS - by organisation type

### Local Government

Most local government authorities have chosen not to register as NDIS providers. The reasons for this are not germane to this report. There does not, however, appear to have been a negative impact on arts and disability programs as a result of these decisions.

There appear to be two reasons for this:

- Where arts and disability services were being provided as part of an arts program (eg through an arts centre), it was not receiving disability services funding, and has not been impacted by the NDIS.
- Where disability services funding was a part of the mix, (for example, with JETS in Banyule), local government guaranteed part of the lost funding, and the organisation continued as an unregistered provider.

### Arts Organisations (not disability specific)

Overall, the NDIS has had no pronounced impact, (negative or positive) on the commitment of arts organisations that are not disability-specific to provide arts and disability programs. The exception is the ArtLife program at Footscray Community Arts Centre, which has an extensive program and is now a registered provider.

While the introduction of the NDIS has not had a pronounced negative impact, it has also not had a positive one. It has not improved the funding for existing disability arts programs in this segment, nor has it encouraged existing arts organisations to offer more programs for Deaf and Disabled artists.

### Arts Organisations (disability specific)

Larger organisations, such as Arts Project Australia, Arts Access and Back to Back Theatre have successfully managed the transition to the NDIS, although registered organisations have reported an increased administrative burden. Arts Project Australia and Arts Access both report increased ongoing administrative costs, and a significant investment in new software to manage the financial reporting and quality management system requirements of the NDIS.

Smaller organisations have faced the choice of whether to become a registered NDIS provider, become an unregistered provider, or to continue without reference to the NDIS. Only two of the smaller organisations (Sunraysia and e.motion21) have chosen to become registered providers.



The majority of small organisations and businesses have chosen to be unregistered providers. The primary reason given by interviewees from small organisations for not registering as an NDIS provider is the bureaucratic costs and burden involved.

Some of these organisations, such as Rawcus Theatre with its mixed ensemble model, feel that the NDIS is both a bad philosophical fit, as well as being wary of the administrative costs. Although Rawcus noted that they were continuing to monitor the situation, and would engage if they could see a way to do so.

## **Community / Neighbourhood Houses**

With their own funding sources, Community and Neighbourhood Houses have not been impacted by the NDIS.

As the financial projection shows, the NDIS is unlikely to be cost-effective for this sector, as the administrative cost, combined with their generally low number of participants, would cancel any benefit.

## **Small businesses and very small organisations**

Small businesses and very small organisations emerged from the research as a very important part of the arts and disability landscape in regional Victoria. The small businesses are operating as unregistered providers, and clearly do not have the administrative capacity to become registered. They are nevertheless required to meet obligations under the NDIS Code of Conduct.

From the established small business operators interviewed, families in regional areas have reacted by becoming self- or plan- managed in a fairly organised way, or as one interviewee put it, telling the NDIA “we live in regional Victoria. Who the @\$% else is there?”

They report that the administrative function is burdensome, takes them away from doing art, and that they would really like to reduce it, but they are not in any financial danger.

A recurrent theme from both the individual interviews and Connecting the Dots workshops was their requests for some kind of “umbrella” or mechanism to reduce the compliance costs.





## Disability service organisations

Disability service organisations are undergoing a period of readjustment and merger, and this is impacting the arts programs that they run.

The report identified one arts program (Interact Australia) which had closed as a result of it becoming non-viable under NDIS. One interviewee identified her arts program as potentially being under threat, because it was financially unviable as a standalone program under the NDIS, but that the organisation was continuing to support it from consolidated revenue.

A third reported that following a merger between two disability service organisations, the arts program was viable and looking to grow over the next several years, although the administrative load had increased significantly.

Fiona Cook reported from the Connecting the Dots workshops that the NDIS has created competition in the market that is resulting in the bigger disability organisations offering art to maintain clients rather than linking them to more community based opportunities – and that smaller arts and boutique arts activities not able to compete. It was not possible to substantiate this within the time available.



## Impact of the NDIS - general considerations

### The bureaucratic burden

Interviews with the providers who have registered revealed that the bureaucratic burden of NDIS registration is considerable, and considerably more than the compliance required under the block grant system.

Arts Access and Arts Project Australia report they had added between 1-2 full-time equivalent positions in administration and accounting to deal with contracting, invoicing and compliance.

Arts program managers in disability service organisations reported that the NDIS had added between 20 and 40 hours of administration per week. This had led to either additional admin staff being added, or less art-focused activity being undertaken.

On top of this ongoing administrative cost, organisations had to make a considerable investment in new software to manage attendance, reporting and invoicing. Attendees at the Connecting the Dots workshops also reported that the NDIS had increased the amount of training that staff needed, and therefore the cost of training.

The experience in the arts is similar to that in the disability sector as a whole, with the 2018 NDIS Market Report finding that: "When asked, close to three quarters (73%) of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the systems and processes of the NDIS were working well (Figure 2). Service provider dissatisfaction with the NDIS may be due to policy uncertainty, lack of meaningful service provider engagement by the NDIA, and pricing and administrative burdens." (Carey, 2018)

Unregistered providers have a lighter administrative burden, but need to comply with the [NDIS Code of Conduct](#). The Code of Conduct creates obligations around training staff, privacy, record-keeping and strongly recommends the creation of written Service Agreements between the provider and the recipient. The unregistered provider also needs to keep attendance records and bill by the hour, which might require adjustments in accounting practices.



## Pricing Issues

### Price setting and marginal profitability

As discussed above (Charging, profit margin & bureaucratic knowledge) the maximum price that an organisation can charge for its services is *effectively* set by the NDIS. This is calculated as an hourly rate. This impacts organisations in several ways.

In 2016, Shaun Cannon, CEO of Kids Plus Foundation, summarised the situation:

"For all service providers, the NDIS can be reduced to a relatively simple equation – given the hourly unit cost, multiplied by the number of service hours they expect to deliver, is the organisation financially viable? The price the NDIA has set does not only include direct service provision (client facing) but all organisational overheads, including everything from liability insurance to the lights. Time will tell if the actuaries have got the pricing model right. The challenge for small to mid-sized organisations is to deliver services at a sufficient scale to ensure that they are sustainable."

"Organisational overheads for small to mid-sized organisations with low client numbers are higher relative to larger organisations. Evidence to date would suggest that the unit cost alone for NDIS funded services simply won't enable small to mid-sized organisations to be viable unless they increase client numbers or are prepared to overhaul traditional organisational structures."

In 2018, Cannon's prognosis was being steadily borne out across the sector, with 28% of organisations reporting a loss, and 38 per cent "discussing or undertaking a merger" in 2018 - up 7 per cent from the previous year. Carey reported that recent review of prices found that 75% of providers within the NDIS are operating at a loss (Carey et al, 2018)

This pricing problem can be seen in the following table which shows the level of profitability of a single arts workshop. The multi-person workshop has been the standard model for arts and disability. In this instance, the workshop is being charged as "Assistance with social and community participation", a typical NDIS support used by arts programs. It has a 1:3 worker to participant ratio which is best practice in the sector.



Analysis of Group Workshop Profitability							
Number of Participants	6	12	18	24	30	36	42
NDIS Price Per Hour *	29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6
Income from 3 hour workshop	532.8	1065.6	1598.4	2131.2	2664	3196.8	3729.6
Variable Expenditure							
No. of Artswokers (ratio 1:3)	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
Artworkers pay rate per hour (incl on-costs)	55	55	55	55	55	55	55
Total Artworkers' costs (4 hours)	440	880	1320	1760	2200	2640	3080
Profit / Loss after Variable Expenditure	92.8	185.6	278.4	371.2	464	556.8	649.6
Fixed Expenditure							
Direct admin cost at \$10 / participant	60	120	180	240	300	360	420
Venue hire at \$30 / hour	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Total Fixed Expenditure	150	210	270	330	390	450	510
Total Expenditure	590	1090	1590	2090	2590	3090	3590
Total Profit/(Loss) per workshop	(57.20)	(24.40)	8.40	41.20	74.00	106.80	139.60

\* Assistance with social and community participation. Group Activities In The Community - 1:2 - Standard - Weekday Daytime. This is a fairly standard weekday support item. Support items such as those for individual training can be higher than this.

This raises two practical issues for arts organisations:

Can the organisation afford to run the program on the basis of NDIS prices?

Does the organisation have the capacity to learn the rules set out in the Price Guide and Support Catalogue?

A third, broader question is: if the traditional workshop model is not financially viable under NDIS, are there other delivery models that are, and that will allow arts organisations to meet the demand being generated by the NDIS? For example, the Support Item **Increased social and community participation (09\_009\_0117\_6\_3)** **Individual Skills Development And Training** can be charged at \$58.52 and is being used by organisations for individual mentoring.



### **Capping Artists Fees**

In a report prepared for the Health Services Union, the Social Policy Research Centre (Cortis, et al, 2017) found that the NDIS Price List assumed low award classifications, and that organisations were struggling to attract qualified personnel at those rates. This will also limit the ability of organisations to remunerate artists.

### **Charging in arrears**

Interviewees with registered organisations reported that the need to charge in arrears has disrupted the business processes of the disability arts organisations that have chosen to become registered providers, resulting in high initial set up costs, and an ongoing administrative burden.

Wayne Pfeiffer reported that in South Australia: "Restless Dance has moved participants to self-managing or plan management of their NDIS funding for Restless Dance with the ability to both charge in advance for the term and invoice families direct and found that most families were able to do this." (Pfeiffer 2018a, p.14).

To avoid charging issues, providers need to have a good understanding of the Price Guide and when it is applicable so that they don't charge more than what can be recovered from the participant's NDIS plan. Essentially, the Price List means that an arts organisation wanting to provide programs needs to become skilled in the NDIS pricing bureaucracy.

### **Summary of Pricing Issues**

The NDIS pricing model is the clear economic driver behind the landscape that is developing in the disability arts sector. Large organisations such as Arts Access, Arts Project Australia, and the disability support organisations, are able to maintain their administrative operations because they have large numbers of participants.

Micro businesses operating in the sector can also function, because although they have a smaller number of participants, they pay their principal / artist directly from the workshop revenue. This is good news for regional Victoria, where this kind of small-scale service provision fits the number of participants. For these organisations to grow, however, is practically impossible on NDIS funding alone.

Given the initial and ongoing costs of the NDIS, many existing small to medium arts organisations would struggle to make a financial case for small-scale disability arts programs. Additional external funding would probably be required to support the program until it could grow to sufficient size.

This marginal profitability and the difficulty of scaling up from small to middle-sized shows up in the repeated requests from small organisations and small businesses for some kind of umbrella system to reduce the administrative costs.





## Profit margin and public exhibition

Disability arts providers within disability service organisations reported that the public presentation components of their programs had either been discontinued, or were under threat as a result of the NDIS. Public presentation - either performances or exhibitions - is not a support that will be funded by the NDIS. Previously, a proportion of the organisation's block grant would be allocated for public presentation. The narrow profit margin of NDIA pricing was not enough to support ongoing public presentation.

Public presentation of work by Deaf and Disabled people is likely to fall under the NDIS.

## Split availability

The unexpected result of individual organisations' decisions to register or not to register is that there are now two classes of disability arts programs: registered programs that are available to everyone, and unregistered programs that are only available to up to 67% of people who self-manage or who are plan managed (either fully or partly).





## Lack of disability arts services in regional Victoria

One key purpose of the NDIS is to create a market in services for Deaf and Disabled people, and in aggregate, there can now be said to be a market for disability arts services.

It is impossible to estimate what percentage of the NDIS is available for arts services, however Fiona Cook concluded that, despite being imperfect, "the NDIS is delivering money to people in regional Victoria to engage in the arts."

The Connecting the Dots workshops revealed that the key problem in regional Victoria is a lack of arts services for Deaf and Disabled people to access. They have the funding from the NDIS, but there is nowhere to spend it. There is NDIS funding for the arts in regional Victoria, but arts organisations are not reacting to the opportunity.

Fiona Cook identified two reasons for this lack:

- regional arts organisations (including local government arts organisations) lack information on NDIS and are not providing for the new market
- regional disability service providers lack information on the arts, and are not providing arts services

University of Melbourne researchers have identified this problem as being prevalent across the NDIS as the new market for services is created. "In some cases, especially in regional areas or where people had specific needs that could not be met by local service providers, service users had limited choice over what was available for them to purchase with their funding package." (Warr, D, *et al.* 2017)

This, in turn creates a problem for individual artists, who risk losing NDIS funding for the arts altogether, because their funding has not been expended. "They risked losing funding altogether because not purchasing services, equipment and support set out in plans was taken by planners as evidence that these supports were unnecessary." (Warr, D *et al* 2017)



## Lack of coordination

Both the interviewees and the participants in the Connecting the Dots workshops reported that shortages in the emerging market are compounded by a lack of coordination.

This view is supported by two pieces of research, which found that lack of coordination was endemic in the new NDIS marketplace.

Celia Green (2018) in her study of competition and collaboration in the NDIS marketplace found that there were two areas of the NDIS that were contributing to this lack of coordination:

- The structure of the NDIS as a marketplace promotes competition among providers, rather than cooperation; and
- Coordination activities are completely unfunded by the NDIS. Any coordination cost simply has to be borne by the organisations involved.

“The new NDIS funding arrangements have meant that care coordination activities are not factored into personalised budgets leaving organisations with less resources to allocate to care coordination activities” (Green, Celia et al 2018)

This view was supported by findings from 2018 National Disability Services Annual Market Survey, which found a worrying lack of coordination among service providers. (Carey, G *et al.* 2018)

Within the arts, the lack of coordination appears particularly acute for smaller organisations and individual arts businesses operating in regional Victoria.



All interviewees saw the potential for growth in the arts and disability sector as a result of the NDIS funding. However, they also felt pressure from the administrative burden of the NDIS, which they saw as preventing them from both providing services to potential participants, and from taking advantage of the extra funding available in the NDIS marketplace.

This points to a third reason for the lack of disability arts services in regional Victoria, to add to the previous two identified by Fiona Cook:

- regional arts organisations (including local government arts organisations) lack information on the NDIS and are not providing for the new market
- regional disability service providers lack information on the arts, and are not providing arts services
- the administrative burden and administrative skill-set required by the NDIS is a barrier to regional arts organisations and businesses entering and expanding their offerings

Interviewees from regional Victoria expressed a clear need for assistance with the administrative burden of the NDIS. They also wanted help in supporting their participants with planning, and expressed a desire to talk with others to make sure that they were 'doing it right.'

A recurrent theme from small disability arts organisations and businesses in regional Victoria was a desire for an *umbrella*. As Fiona Cook expressed it: "The idea of an [administrative] umbrella comes up all of the time for the small organisations. That's about the paperwork and their capacity. Huge number of programs are being delivered by a team of two. There is a very limited capacity to do all of the back end."

It is clear from interviews, and the Connecting the Dots workshops, that the administrative burden is having a significant effect in discouraging arts organisations and businesses from engaging with the additional funding available under the NDIS.



# Conclusions

## Organisations

The introduction of the NDIS has not resulted in a significant loss of disability arts programs

The NDIS is providing more funding to artists with disability, creating a market for disability arts services, and an opportunity for the sector to expand

Arts organisations are not reacting to this increased funding for four reasons:

1. regional arts organisations (including local government arts organisations) lack information on NDIS
2. regional disability service providers lack information on the arts, and are not providing arts services
3. the administrative burden and administrative skill-set (including the NDIS model of supports) required by the NDIS is a barrier to arts organisations and businesses entering and expanding their offerings
4. price setting by the NDIS makes it an unattractive proposition for the traditional workshop-based model

Low profit margins, and hence the high capacity required to be financially successful under the NDIS funding does not have the capacity to replace Arts funding in the arts and disability sector.

There are significant gaps in disability arts program provision in both Melbourne and regional Victoria (where services are frequently not available)

It is unclear whether disability service organisations have expanded their disability arts offerings under NDIS

NDIS does not fund public presentations which were previously funded under block grants, therefore the public presentation of work by Deaf and Disabled artists is likely to decrease, especially in regional areas.



## For Individual Artists

Planners lack information on the arts, which does hamper individuals getting money in their plans for the arts

The issue of NDIS not covering class and workshop fees is constantly raised as a barrier to inclusion

The lack of any NDIS guidelines directly addressing the arts poses a problem for Deaf and Disabled artists trying to include supports as part of their Plan.





# Recommendations

Undertake further work to systematically determine the geographical areas where there is unmet demand for the arts and disability services

Coordinate with local providers (or potential providers) to create services in those areas that would be entirely funded by the NDIS marketplace

That expansion would not require any direct project funding from Creative Victoria, but could be funded by the expanding NDIS marketplace.

It would require initial, indirect funding from Creative Victoria to encourage and coordinate the growth.

## Channels for growth

Growth can occur in four possible ways:

1. Existing, larger disability arts organisations expand their offerings. This is likely to be appropriate for parts of metropolitan Melbourne, where arts organisations can identify regions of high demand, and use their existing scale to grow. This would require clear strategy and coordination between the organisations concerned.
2. Established arts organisations (including local government) begin offering services under NDIS. The low profitability of disability arts programs under NDIS pricing makes this model of rollout the least likely to succeed. Organisations would either have to commit to growing their programs to scale to achieve break even, or would need to subsidise the programs.
3. Existing disability support organisations expand their disability arts offerings. After several years of mergers, most of these organisations are registered and have the scale to operate under the NDIS, but most do not appear to be looking at the arts as an area of expansion. An information campaign based on the case of unmet demand might be effective.
4. Providing support micro-businesses and small organisations in regional Victoria as unregistered providers. Given that at small scale, these programs are profitable under NDIS, this could be an effective approach to meet demand in small communities.



## **Support small organisations and businesses with a software-based administrative umbrella**

Managing administration under the NDIS is a real problem for small organisations. On the flip side, quality control of these unregistered providers is a potential problem for the NDIA.

The Flowlogic software system developed for Arts Access Victoria provides both a full scale quality assurance system that complies with the NDIS, and a simple-to-use administrative interface that gets most of the tasks done without too much specialised training.

It would be possible to develop an “auspiced software” model, where Arts Access provided small organisations with access to Flowlogic. This could solve their administration problem, a quality assurance problem.



# Appendices

## Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grants

The following arts organisation have received funding from the NDIA under the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Grants since 2016/2017.

### Economic Participation ILC grant round (2019)

Organisation	State	Project Title	Primary Disability	Project Description	Total Approved Funding (GST INCL.)	Project Coverage Area
Bus Stop Films Ltd	NSW	Screen Industry Employment Pathways for People with Disability — Training Program	Other	This project will create a unique screen industry-focused training package for production companies and industry services (Camera/Sound Equipment Hire, Hair and Make Up etc.) to better skill them in understanding how people with disability can be employed within their organisations.	\$60,698.00	ACT, NSW, QLD, SA, VIC
Darwin Community Arts Incorporated	NT	Free Space Public Art Collective	Other	This pilot initiative will work with a select team of 6 artists with disability over 6 months (a 3-hour workshop/week) to develop a suite of artworks appropriate for installation in public spaces. The project will take participants through all aspects of the development of a public art project, including a workshop with professional artists, structured sessions with designer/s and fabricator/s to appropriately interpret and translate their artwork into another medium, and real work experience of delivering a large-scale arts project through to completion for local government.	\$142,912.00	NT
Back to Back Theatre Inc.	VIC	Back to Back Theatre - A TV Internship Program	Intellectual Disability	An innovative workplace placement scheme of paid TV Internships will connect Back to Back Theatre (B2B) with mainstream employers through a partnership with Matchbox Pictures, ABC TV, Film Victoria, Screen Australia and the City of Greater Geelong with Deakin University as Research & Evaluation Partner..	\$595,233.10	VIC
Tutti Arts Incorporated	SA	Stand and Deliver	Intellectual Disability	Stand and Deliver is a two-stage project aimed at supporting artists with intellectual and learning disabilities to secure work opportunities in a way which educates employers, opening doors to paid work.	\$125,628.80	SA
					\$924,471.90	



## Disabled Peoples and Families Organisations (2019)

These are organisations who meet all three of the following criteria:

1. Actively demonstrate their commitment to the Social Model of Disability, which seeks to remove barriers for people with disability to access mainstream services and live an ordinary life; and
2. Are run by and for people with disability and/or their families; and
3. Are led and controlled by people with disability and/or their families with a minimum membership of 50% of people with a disability and/or their families making up the organisation's board, or staff, or volunteers or members.

Organisation (State) Project Title	ILC Priority Cohort Groups	Primary Disability	Project Description	Total Approved Funding  (GST EXCL.)
Accessible Arts( NSW)  Regional NSW Pilot	Not Ap- plicable	All Deaf and Disabled people	<p><b>Organisational Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Expand the volunteer advisors' network to include more regionally based members and encourage their contribution of ideas to the development of programs, training and consulting services. The Network will provide input to inform local arts and cultural organisations as they develop Disability Inclusion Action Plans and promote awareness. The project will enable engagement with regional cultural organisations to form an "Accessing the Arts Group. Professional development opportunities will be made available to staff to support inclusive program implementation.</p> <p><b>Individual Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Establish a peer-led artists group to support professional development and career path planning. Develop the skills of six artists with a disability so they can expand their professional capacity to include training services. The artists will undertake 'train the trainer' learning and develop leadership skills, public speaking, vocational pathways and online communication experience. The project will also commission and showcase the work of artists with disability.</p>	\$87,000.00



Organisation (State) Project Title	ILC Priority Cohort Groups	Primary Disability	Project Description	Total Approved Funding  (GST EXCL.)
Auspicious Arts Projects Inc (Auspicee: DeafBlind Vic- toria) (VIC)  Deafblind Community - Living Without Barriers	Culturally and Lin- guistically Diverse people	Hearing Impair- ment and Visual Im- pairment	<p><b>Organisational Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Upskill and train staff with deafblindness to (Improve their leadership, work skills and capabilities), establish a strong partnership with DeafBlind Australia to have a National reach, collaborate with Auslan services to build stronger relationships with interpreters that understand deafblindness, conduct a needs-analysis of members, and develop internal policies, processes and procedures.</p> <p><b>Individual Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Professional development workshops and guest speakers, covering motivation, confidence, empowerment to act, self-advocacy, independence and relationship building through peer support and self-advocacy opportunities. Participation and contribution to the Deafblind, Deaf and broader disability community through increased events and partnerships. Access to information on key issues like communication needs, rights and independence.</p>	\$117,611.90
Indel Ability Arts Ltd (QLD)  Arts for All — Providing Professional Artistic Oppor- tunities and Development for People with Disabili- ties to have a Career in the Performing Arts as Part of a Professional Theatre Com- pany.	Not Ap- plicable	All Deaf and Disabled people	<p><b>Organisational Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Employ a business manager/mentor to up-skill staff to support improvement of the company's governance policies and procedures, employ a company development manager to work with team and volunteers to improve reach, train staff and board members with disabilities in use of software systems, and provide human and technical support for team members with a disability.</p> <p><b>Individual Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Create a mentor/intern program, supporting the development of new projects initiated and led by artists, starting a creative writing program; giving artists an opportunity to have their voices heard through written form, starting a masterclass program to up-skill artists through specialist training opportunities, and expanding the workshop leader training program.</p>	\$117,830.00





Organisation (State) Project Title	ILC Priority Cohort Groups	Primary Disability	Project Description	Total Approved Funding  (GST EXCL.)
Tutti Arts Incorporated (Auspicee: Sit Down Shutup And Watch (SA)  Cut Above — Learning Dis- ability Leaders	Remote/ Rural delivery	Intellectual Disability	<p><b>Organisational Capacity Building</b> Review the purpose and operations of the steering committee, provide opportunities for active involvement in leadership, expand committee from six to twelve, engage more women as disability leaders, and use filmmaking to develop skills. .</p> <p><b>Individual Capacity Building</b> Using film as an educational tool, a comprehensive leadership program will be established. Peers will consult with industry leaders in film, disability and education. The program will be peer led, coordinator supported and will be tailored to the needs of the individual. It will be delivered in person and via webinar. Content will be accessible and adaptable, encouraging maximum skill growth and increased confidence.</p>	\$117,760.16
Rebus Theatre (ACT)  Act for your Life	Not Ap- plicable	All Deaf and Disabled people	<p><b>Organisational Capacity Building</b> Improve administrative systems, risk management and strategic plans, marketing materials, evaluation methods, policies and procedures. Update website, media library, curriculum documents, templates and administrative databases. Purchase IT and software systems, and provide accredited training for staff to improve financial management capabilities and training delivery. <b>Individual Capacity Building</b> In partnership with ACT Down Syndrome Association and Women with Disabilities ACT, lead workshops to enhance communication, social skills and job-readiness for people with communication disabilities, using Playback Theatre.</p>	\$116,877.88
				\$557,079.94



## 2017 – 2018 Round 2 ILC Jurisdictional Grants ACT, NSW and South Australia

More than \$28.5 million over two years has been allocated to deliver 104 Round 2 ILC Jurisdictional Based grants in NSW, SA and ACT. A total of 55 activities will be delivered in NSW, 32 in SA and 17 in the ACT. The recipients of the ILC Jurisdictional Based Grants for each jurisdiction can be found below:

Organisation	Project Title	Project Description	Total Funding Amount (Gst Excl.) & Duration (2 Years)	ILC Activity Area	Focus Area: Disability and demographics
NSW Eastern Riverina Arts (Project partners – Consortium: IDEAS Information on Disability & Awareness Services.)	PLATFORM	PLATFORM is a purpose built portable 'space' created from adapting a 40ft shipping container into an accessible sensory space designed by artists with disability. PLATFORM will be offered to community festivals free of charge as a way to educate them about the engagement of artists with disability and to increase the participation and visibility of artists and people with disability at these community events. A dedicated curator will commission at least 20 artists with disability (both visual arts and performing arts) and coordinate PLATFORM to tour eight regional festivals. Training and advice will also be provided to volunteer based festival organisers to make their events more accessible.	\$588,280.00	Community Awareness and Capacity Building	All Deaf and Disabled people
SA Bardic Studio	Access All Areas Film Festival	<p>This project will coordinate screenings of the Access All Areas Film Festival (AAAFF) across every Local Government Area in South Australia. The film festivals showcase the lived experience of people with disability, and all films that are showed involve people with disability in key creative filmmaking roles. Further, people with disability provide advice around accessibility needs for screenings, publicly introduce the screenings and lead community discussions immediately after films are shown.</p> <p>The program aims to reach an audience of 10,000 people over two years.</p>	\$35,000.00	Community Awareness and Capacity Building	All Deaf and Disabled people



Organisation	Project Title	Project Description	Total Funding Amount (Gst Excl.) & Duration (2 Years)	ILC Activity Area	Focus Area: Disability and demographics
ACT Rebus Theatre	Access All Areas	This project will deliver a series of capacity-building workshops for employees of three mainstream services: Health, Justice and Transport. The project uses Forum Theatre as the format for the workshops: comprising of a short play performed by a cast of actors with disabilities. The play draws on stories of inclusion and exclusion from people with disabilities and employees of mainstream services, using the actors' lived experience, documented research, and stories from the broader community.	\$199,984.07	Capacity building for mainstream services	All Deaf and Disabled people
ACT Accessible Arts	Arts Inclusion	<i>Arts Inclusion</i> will build capacity in art organisations for people with disability to participate as artists, volunteers, workers and audience members. Four people with disability will be selected to receive mentorship and participate in 'train the trainer' workshops to then lead a range of inclusion capacity building initiatives with mainstream arts organisations. The project also intends to launch a campaign to reduce online barriers for people with disability and make it simpler to plan arts and cultural experiences. Accessible Arts will also develop a website, a Braille pocket guide and will host an access, inclusion and participation forum to showcase the accessible activities from ACT based arts and cultural organisations.	\$102,500.00	Community awareness and capacity building	All Deaf and Disabled people
ACT-Bardic Studio	Access All Areas Film Festival	Access All Areas Film Festival (AAAFF) will transform the way Australians see disability by screening award winning films which reflect the lived experience of people with disability and showcase their creative vision, artistry and compelling stories. Screenings will be scheduled in every Local Government Area (LGA) in ACT, and an annual prize will be initiated for the best Australian short film reflecting the lived experience of people with disability. These screenings aim to demonstrate the cost benefits to commercial cinemas in increasing access for Australians with disability by integrating accessible features into screenings.	\$12,500.00	Community awareness and capacity building	All Deaf and Disabled people
			\$938,264.07		



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