

Arts Access Victoria Annual Report

2024



ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS
OF ARTS AND DISABILITY
1974 - 2024



Acknowledgment of Country



We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country and custodians across all lands and waters now known as Australia. We pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living here and those who have previously lived on these lands. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land and waterways. We acknowledge that their sovereignty has never been ceded.

Content Advice: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this Annual report contains names of deceased people.

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2024 In Numbers



We supported more than **1,700** artists

224 new works were produced



We presented **29** exhibitions and performances

We have **138** strategic partnerships



5320 people subscribe to our monthly eNews

We engaged **62538** audience members



Our websites had **135,000** views

22,156 accounts follow us on social media



We ran **1,345** creative workshops and Mentorships

We ran **65** training workshops and consultations



We received over **50,000** information requests

We provided **228** artists with paid opportunities



We supported **193** artists applying for funding

Arts Access Victoria

50 Years of Arts and Disability

The Mad Hatters Party to Open AAV's New Ramp, 1985.



Arts Access Victoria (AAV) is the state's peak body for arts and disability. Since 1974, AAV has been a leader in disability arts practice, access and cultural equity. AAV is disability-led. AAV produces and platforms the work of Deaf and Disabled artists. AAV's goals are to:

- Define and build cultural equity for Deaf and Disabled people
- Target and shift the barriers and conditions that maintain cultural inequity
- Position AAV as a resilient and dynamic powerhouse to extend its role and impact.

We want everyone represented in all areas of the arts, screen and creative industries. We believe art is a tool for change. We celebrate the aesthetic potential of disability and access. We share authentic stories that are ours to tell. We produce and platform excellence in disability arts and culture.

AAV shares unique and untold stories that challenge the issues that frame the lives of Deaf and Disabled people. It places Deaf and Disabled artists, not at the margins, but centre stage. Recognising them instead as significant and invaluable contributors to the Australian cultural landscape.

What Is Plain English?

This Annual Report is in Plain English. The Plain English Campaign started in the UK in 1974 by Chrissie Maher OBE. Chrissie shredded hundreds of official documents in Parliament Square, London as a protest. She was angry because people were not receiving government money they were owed. The forms and paperwork to receive their money were too difficult to understand. Chrissie Maher wants us to make information accessible for all. Here in Australia, most people read up to a Year 7 or 8 level of literacy. Let's use Plain English to include everyone.

A Message From the Chair



2024 was an incredible year for Arts Access Victoria (AAV). We celebrated our 50th birthday.

I am honoured to be the chair of an organisation that has accomplished so much these last 50 years. In July, we presented The Collective at The Stables in North Melbourne. The exhibition highlighted the amazing work we have done and continue to do for the Australian arts and disability sector. Here's to another 50 years!

We welcomed Joshua Pether, brilliant artist and leader, as our new CEO. We said goodbye to Caroline Bowditch and thank her for her commitment and passion these last 6 years.

I would like to thank our funding partners, particularly Creative Australia, Creative Victoria and the Victorian Government, the City of Melbourne, and the City of Port Phillip.

Thank you to the AAV Board for their support and service to the organisation. They continue to bring their passion, dedication and experience to the organisation. I would like to extend special thanks to our outgoing Treasurer Laura Purbrick and Board Member Sam Martin. I would like to thank them for their valuable time and commitment.

Thank you to Deputy CEO/ General Manager Nikki Zerella and the Management team. Thank you to all the AAV staff, who embody care, creativity and advocacy every day.

And finally thank you to the artists we work with. I've loved the stories, music, images and objects that I have experienced this year. Thank you.

- Nic Vogelpoel

A Message From the CEO



I joined AAV in July, and it has been non-stop ever since. First the Collective, then Alter State 2024 and ending with The Other Film Festival.

It was a wonderful experience to start my time at AAV with The Collective. It has given me deep insight and respect for AAV's legacy and everything AAV continues to do. I truly am 'standing on the shoulders of giants' and feel honoured to continue the proud work of past AAV leaders.

As with every leader that has come before me, I bring my own unique skills and experience. I am the first Indigenous person to be given this role and I hope my leadership will pave the way for more indigenous people to work in this space of disability arts.

I have a dream for the future of Australian arts and culture that incorporates disability into every aspect of it. A dream that builds a

community of artists and arts workers that become self-determined in every part of their artistic practice and work. I ask you to come on this journey with us. I ask you to aim for a future and vision beyond that of which is possible.

Thank you to all the artists we work with, it has been a pleasure getting to know you and your practice.

Thank you to the AAV staff for their hard work and dedication to the artists we work with and the larger arts and culture sector. Thank you to the AAV Board for their support and dedication to AAV.

Thank you to all our funding partners that continue to believe us and our vision for the future.

- Joshua Pether

A Year Like No Other

Flags
at the
Collective,
2024.
Photo by
Teague
Leigh.



The Collective

To celebrate our birthday we dived into the Archives. We opened boxes and searched into hard drives. What we found was incredible. We used our history as building blocks to create The Collective.

The Archives

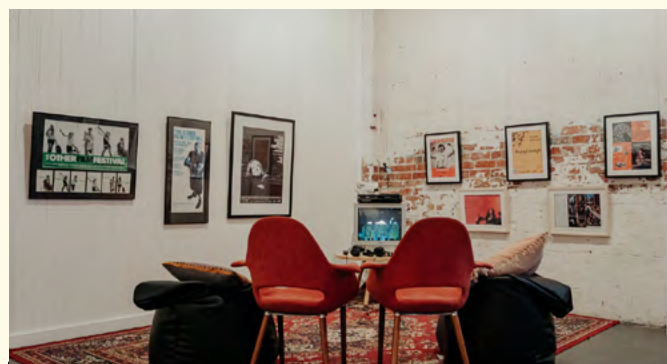
At the entrance of The Collective was a welcome room. The room gave you a piece of the AAV Archives. There was a TV playing old arts projects. Tape players with past music outcomes and old publications were scattered around. The walls featured posters from the last 50 years.

Alongside The Collective, we published monthly Flashbacks online. Each Flashback focused on five years of AAV history. We shared past projects and developments. We invited everyone to learn about where we started and how we became the organisation we are today.

[Check out the Flashbacks on our website](#)

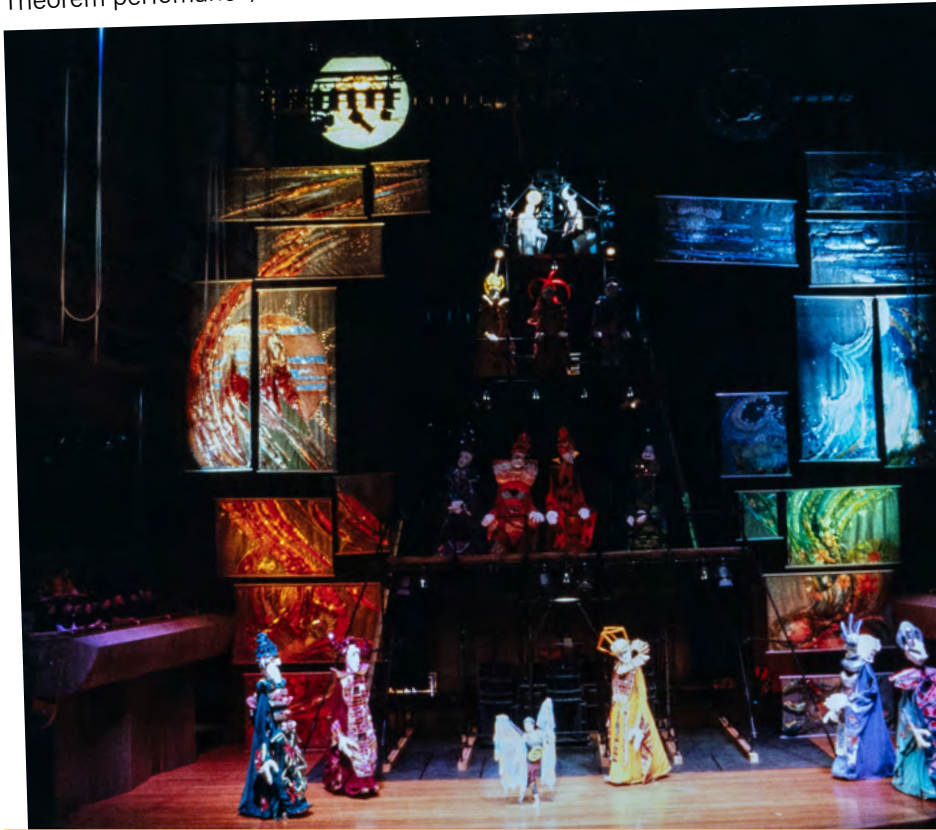
The Collective Video Work: Responding to the Past

We chose seven works from the archives to represent AAV's incredible history. We shared these works with Deaf and Disabled artists in our studio and mentorship programs. We asked them to make creative responses to the archives. Together these works became an hour-long video installation.



AAV Studios and Mentorships

Deaf and Disabled Artists from the Studios teamed up to respond to different works. Artists involved in our mentorship program responded to individual works within an exhibition.



“It’s important to do my performances. It’s my passion”
– Kate Niddrie

Kate Niddrie,
Response to
Theorem, Still,
2024.

Way Out West and Maidstone Respond to Theorem

In 1981 we started Theorem. Chilean Director Aldo Gennaro worked with dramatist Bronwen Barton and puppeteer Greg Temple. They ran 25 workshops across Victoria. Over 800 Deaf and Disabled people and who have experienced disadvantage took part. These workshops became a major theatrical performance at Melbourne Concert Hall (now called Hamer Hall). There were over 100 performers. Theorem featured puppetry, banners, mime, costume and ritual. The show was a smash hit!



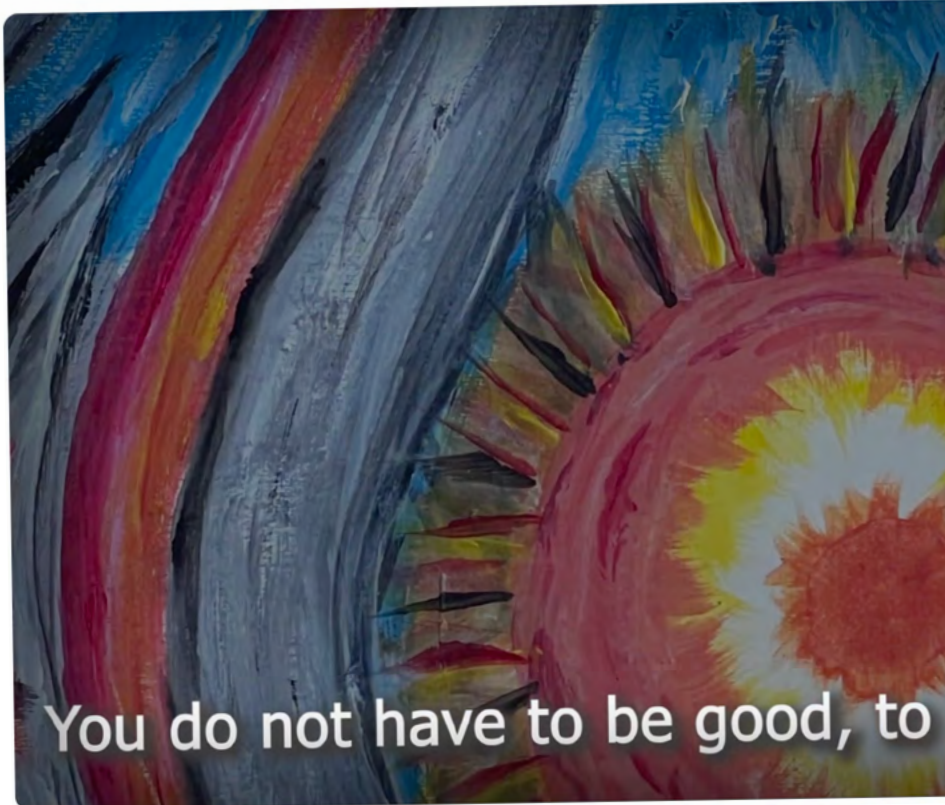
Theorem Puppets, from the AAV Archives, 1981

Way Out West artist Kate Niddrie felt inspired by the costumes and ritualistic dance in Theorem. She loved that the performers looked and moved like she did. Kate created her own dance response to the work. She recreated the flowing movement of the original work in her own style and form. Kate said dance makes her feel powerful and performing is her passion.



Maria Serruto, response to Theorem, drawing, 2024.

We opened a new studio in 2024 called **Maidstone Studio**. The studio is based in Maidstone and is open to Deaf and Disabled artists who cannot access the NDIS. We presented Theorem to the Maidstone studio artists. They brought unique experiences to



Art Stop Artist response to A Taste of Crime, Sculpture, 2024.



The Collective because they had only recently joined AAV. However we have been around for 50 years and worked with many people. In fact two of the artists realised they had connections to Theorem and by extension AAV. One artist told us her children were part of the performance. The kids had gone to workshops, helped build sets and rehearsed for their part in the show. Another artist was in the audience.

Artstop and Nimbus Respond to A Taste of Crime.

Throughout the 1980s and 90s AAV worked inside prisons and juvenile justice centres. A major outcome from this time was 'A Taste of Crime' — a performance piece written and performed in by women of Fairlea Prison in 1989. The 90-minute show featured songs and stories written by the women. They created sets and backdrops for the show. The work reflected on their lives at Fairlea and before. We brought audiences into Fairlea Prison. Over 1,000 people attended the performances over four nights.



Set Building for A Taste of Crime, from the AAV archives, 1989.

Artstop and **Nimbus** responded to these works. We took a different approach with the artists when responding to A taste of Crime. The two studios came together. We made sure the artists felt safe and supported when discussing the original works. Our focus was on empowering artists to engage in a way they felt comfortable. The result was both studios collaborating on multimedia works.

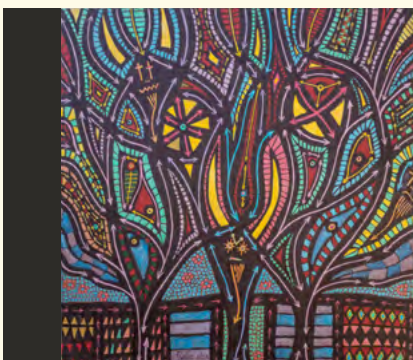
“Nimbus has opened me up to new opportunities and pushed me forward in my practice” – Bram Heinrich McPartian

Nimbus artists responded to the politics of A Taste of Crime. While Artstop responded to the mental health themes in the performance.



Mentorship program artists Respond to Stormy Weather

Stormy Weather was a major touring exhibition in the early 1990s. A major objective was to support the professional development of emerging Deaf and Disabled artists and those who have experienced disadvantage. Stormy Weather was an opportunity for many of the artists involved to show and sell their work. Stormy Weather featured 57 works by 28 artists across all visual art mediums. Back in the early 1990s, the title Stormy Weather acknowledged the reality of being a Deaf and/or Disabled artist. The artists felt that it represented their lives. It presented the double-sided situation in which most of them found themselves.



Laurence Flegg, Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 2024.

Aleshanee Faery created a work called Catastrophic. They responded to Selwyn Hoffman's works in Stormy Weather. Selwyn's work featured maritime signal flags. They were bright fluorescent orange of lifejackets for a storm warning.



Selwyn Hoffman, Melbourne, presented in Stormy Weather. From the AAV archives, 1992.

Aleshanee Faery wrote: Catastrophic is an emergency weather warning category that did not exist 50 years ago. The brown paper background represents the Earth's environmental crisis. My hand-carved black stamps represent misunderstood and ignored communications, which is an experience that many people with disabilities may relate to.



Highlights From Our Mentorships Program In 2024.

Frank is a visual artist who joined the mentorship program in July 2024.

For Frank art making is a very important part of his life. He uses it as a way for him to escape his day-to-day challenges and personal issues. Frank has used his mentorship to find a new way to structure his life. He has been able to focus on art, which has helped him to maintain the life that he desires. He has found the mentoring sessions beneficial and grounding that he asked for two sessions a week. We were able to offer this. Frank now spends six hours every week to focus on his growing arts practice with his mentor.

Patrick
Tonks,
Hand Trees.
Stormy
Weather
Response,
animation,
2024.



Frank has a strong interest in Old Masters. He wants to learn more about art history and different approaches to making art. He is doing this with his mentor.

SRS Studios Respond to Art Day West Song Book



Art Day
West,
Songbook
album
cover, from
the AAV
archives,
2001.

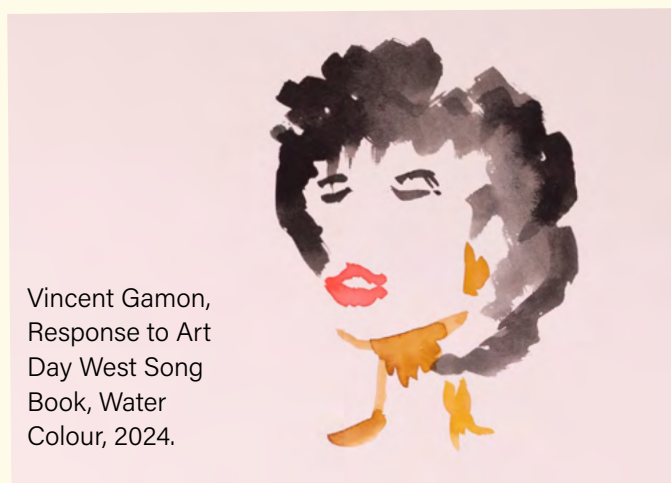
In 2001 AAV's Art Day West Studio created their Songbook. The Songbook brought together past projects exploring identity. The artists made soft sculptures of themselves, as well as large scale drawings. They wrote and recorded music.

Antonio Lututu and Jing He, SRS Studios
Response to Art Day West song book, still, 2024.



I paint and draw whatever I like, I feel like a professional artist when I do art here. I feel happy and I feel I'm opening up"
- Jing He, Queens Lodge

The **SRS Studios** response explored the songs made by Art Day West. As well as music that the SRS artists felt reflected themselves and their histories. They used music to connect with each other. The SRS artists told each other personal stories. They connected with each other with specific songs. This process brought the SRS artists together. They made art and music that reflected themselves and their experiences.

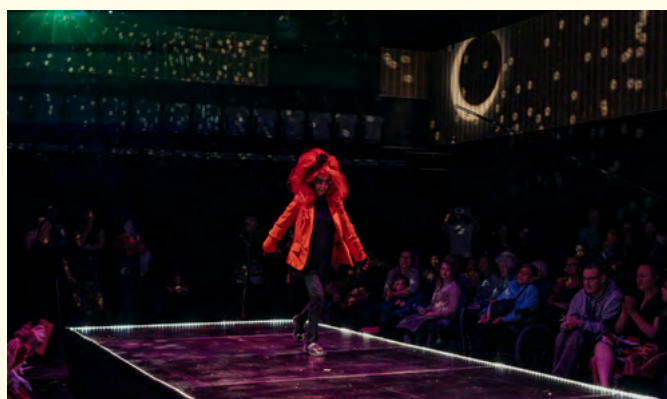


Vincent Gamon,
Response to Art
Day West Song
Book, Water
Colour, 2024.

The SRS studios celebrated their 30th birthday this year with a documentary short in The Other Film Festival.

Art Day South and Get Out! Respond to WOWalk: A Fashion Show to Save the World.

In 2019 Way Out West Presented WOWalk: a Fashion Show to Save the World. Way Out West Artists made garments and strutted their stuff down the catwalk at Be Bold Festival.



Annette Attard performing at WOWWalk, from the AAV archives, 2019. Photo by Raphael Recht.

Art Day South and Get Out! teamed up to create their response work. They created soft sculptures, embodied textiles, costumes. They made sets to bring their response to life in video form. The current studio artists met up and shared their artworks and practices with each other. They created their own



wearable artworks. They modelled their work on video camera in front of green screens. We photographed their non-wearable artwork. We edited the footage of the artists on top of images of their other work. The final piece was a virtual fashion show exploding with colour.

We presented 50 Birds at the APA gallery in Collingwood Yards. The exhibition profiled the works of many great artists across the AAV and APA studios. Artworks included Kristy Sweeney's drawings of parading birds and Lisa Pownall's ceramics of birdlife in the bush. Artists sold the majority of their artworks.



Get Out! Performance at The Collective, 2024.

Highlight: AAV Celebrates 50 Years With Arts Project Australia - 50 Birds.

50 Birds, an exhibition by AAV and Arts Project Australia (APA). The exhibition was a celebration of both our organisation's 50th birthdays. One bird for every year. We ended up with many more birds!



Lisa Pownall, *Dromaius novaehollandiae* (Least Concern), Ceramic.



Reponse Room and Panels

We invited audiences to respond to The Collective and to share stories of their experience with us. We loved going over everyone's responses and learning about our shared history.

“The most important thing that AAV has given me is belief in art and myself.”
- Anonymous

Fridays At The Collective

Over three Fridays in July we held three panels, each focusing on a different period of AAV's history. The past, present and future. We livestreamed each panel.

Past

The first panel was: AAV founder Judy Morton, past AAV CEO Veronica Pardo and Caroline Bowditch and current AAV CEO Joshua Pether. They shared stories of their time at AAV and in the broader arts and culture sector.

Present

The second panel were artists involved in The Collective response work: Bram Heinrich-McPartlan, Vee Rodrigues, Chelle DeStefano. They reflected on their artworks and experience of being part of The Collective.

Future - YAC and Manifesto

The Future panel featured members of our Youth Advisory Committee. They discussed the future of the arts and what we want the arts to be. Along with the panel they shared their Manifesto for the future of arts and culture.



The Collective Response room, 2024.
Photo by Teague Leigh.



TOFF Turned 20!

The Other Film Festival (TOFF) is a ground-breaking disability-led screen program. We place Deaf and Disabled people at the centre of the Australian screen industry. We started TOFF in 2004. TOFF is Australia's first international disability film festival. We are a pioneer in global standard of universal



access for audiences. We champion and present all kinds of Deaf and Disabled screen work. Our major focus is on Australian shorts, documentaries and features. We provide Deaf and Disabled talent and audiences compelling high-quality accessible events. Events

include screenings, talks, industry panels and professional development opportunities.

20 years is a significant achievement, and we are proud of our origin story. We acknowledge that the screen landscape has transformed over the last 20 years. Deaf and Disabled Storytellers play a vital role in the screen industry. They are shaping and developing new ways to create work and connect with audiences. We have worked hard to reposition TOFF in the screen eco-system. We embrace the merging of film, art, media, and technology. We challenge screen production and industry practices to prioritise accessibility. We aim to create an authentic and inclusive screen culture and audience experiences.





Agency

Our 2024 Screening program 'Agency' focused on the self-determination of Deaf and Disabled people. Deaf and Disabled people are so often denied power and agency in their own lives. The 2024 films explored different kinds of agency in storytelling. They revealed untold stories and ways of being in the world.



The program included: Australian documentary Rewards for The Tribe and international documentaries The Stimming Pool (UK) and Leilani's Fortune (Canada). We presented eight Australian short films featuring many different themes and perspectives. They showcase a new wave in Australian disability screen culture.

All films were available to stream across Australia via ACMI's Cinema 3 for free. We audio described and captioned every film.

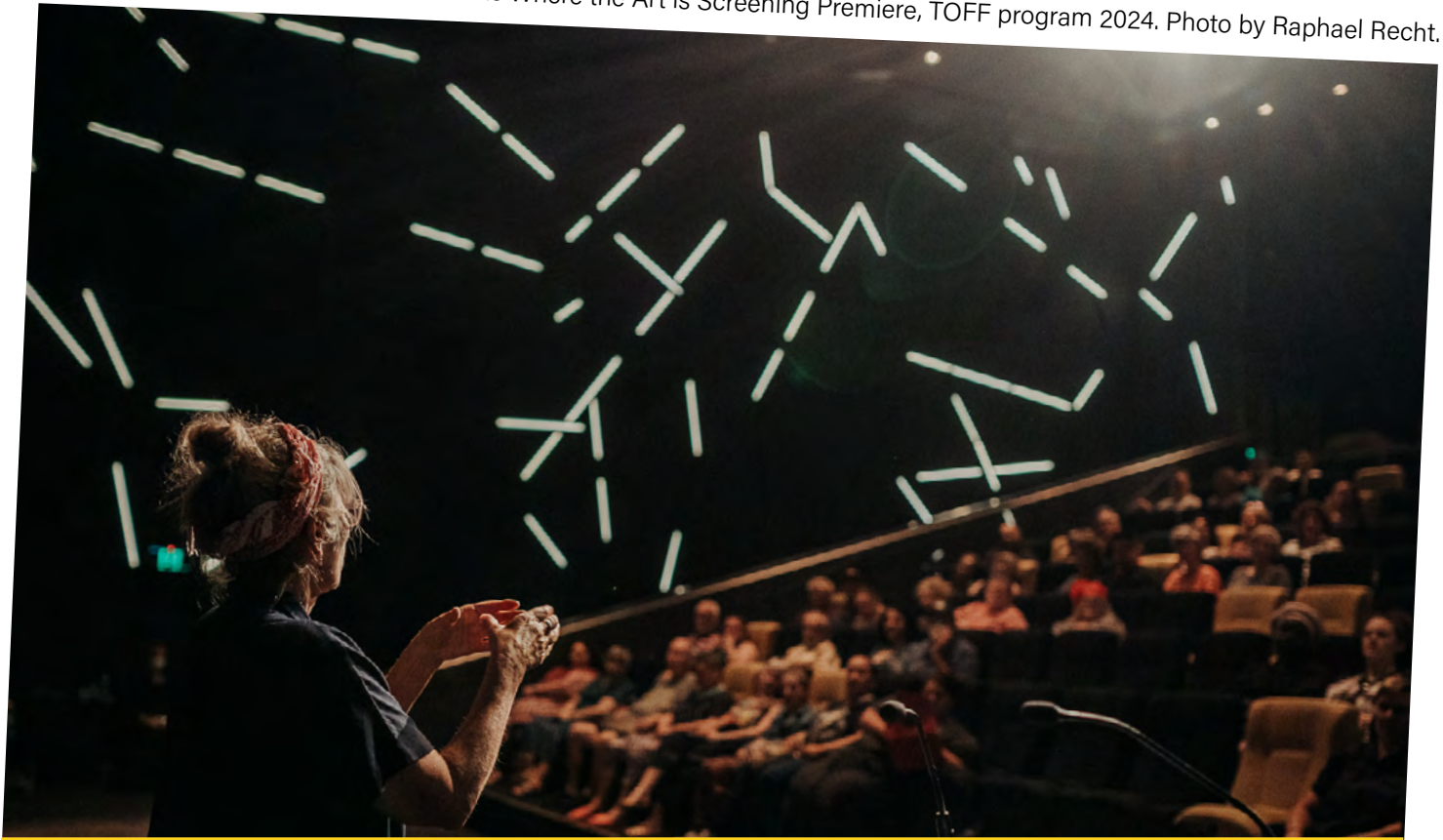
Home Is Where the Art Is



Audience mingle after Home is Where the Art is Screening Premiere, TOFF program 2024. Photo by Raphael Recht.

SRS Studio artists worked with videographer Leonie Van Eyk. She visited all SRS Studios and interviewed artists about:

- Being part of the SRS Studios
- Being an artist
- How they create
- What art means to them



Director Rachel Edward edited the footage into a 12-minute short documentary film. The documentary included original music and artwork created by SRS Studio artists. We embedded audio description.



Irene Ryan, response to Art Day West song book, 2024.

SRS Studios are run inside Supported Residential Services. We run the studios inside the artists homes . This means 'outsiders' rarely understand the experience of SRS Studio artists. 'Home is Where the Art Is' gave audiences a snapshot of SRS studios artists lives. Highlighting how vital art is for them.

We screened 'Home is Where the Art is' as part of The Other Film Festival's 2024 program at ACMI on December 3. SRS studio artists were front and centre on the 'Big Screen' in a professional cinema setting at ACMI. We also screened 'Blue' by Irene Holub and 'Bus Stop' by Vinh Nguyen.

Artists came to the event dressed up for their film premiere. The Artists said having their names read out in the credits was a major highlight for them.

“I loved it. It made me feel good and famous to see myself on the big screen. It made me feel like a movie star!”

The Other Film Festival is supported by The City of Melbourne, the Victorian Government through VicScreen's Audience Engagement Program and Screen Australia.



VICSCREEN



ALTER STATE

2 - 13 October

**Disabled Futures:
a glimpse of
what's to come.**



Alter State

Alter State is a biennial Disability Arts festival. Alter State is a partnership between Arts Access Victoria and Arts Centre Melbourne.

Disabled Futures

Alter State 2024 was a two-week showcase of disability arts from across the country. Alter State was in 34 venues across Melbourne and online. Over 34000 people attended 105 Shows, Exhibitions, Workshops and Screenings. Over 90% of audiences reported feeling welcomed and enjoying themselves.

I I felt pride and belonging in every room at Alter State. I could feel everyone's joy and excitement."

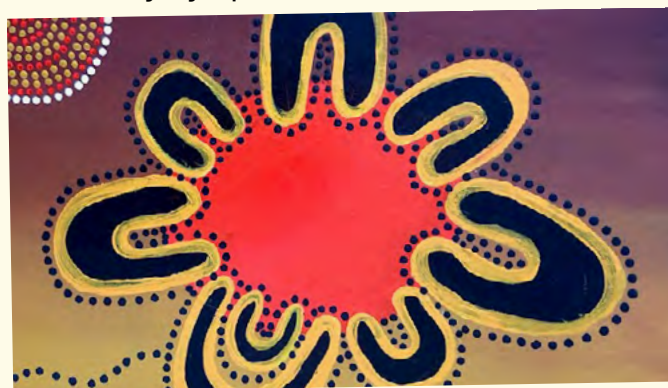
– audience member.

First Nations Deaf and Disabled Alter State Delegates

8 First Nations Deaf and Disabled artists and arts workers from across the country joined us as Alter State Delegates.

We invited the Delegates to take part in the first three Alter State events.

- First Nations Deaf and Disabled Yarning Circle.
- Alter State opening night performances.
- Delegates and presenters for the Alter State two-day Symposium.



First Nations Deaf and Disabled Yarning Circle

We are proud to have presented the first inaugural First Nations Deaf and Disabled Yarning Circle at Alter State. We invited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Deaf and Disabled artists and arts workers from



all nations across Australia and the Torres Straits to gather and yarn. This gave everyone involved much needed space. Mob gathered to Yarn about important things hidden from the world and things we have been afraid to say.

Alter State Elder in Residence, Wurundjeri Elder Auntie Di Kerr guided the Yarning Circle with her wisdom and care. Joshua Pether (AAV CEO and First Nations Alter State curator) led the Yarn with Uncle Paul Calcott.

Disabled Futures: Alter State Opening Night

Opening night presented some of Australia's leading First Nations Deaf and Disabled artists (Alter State Delegates). Audiences experienced the intimate, the taboo and hilarious on opening night.

Joshua Pether curated opening night alongside Alter State Creative Lead Jodee Mundy OAM. Featured performances by Miss Phoria, Renay Barker Mulholland, Khahlil Walker and Crystal Love Johnson.

“ Having us first is incredible. We are usually up the back and out of sight. But here? We are at the front”

- Auntie Di Kerr

Alter State 2-day Symposium

Uncle Paul Calcott Co-hosted the Alter State Symposium alongside former AAV CEO Caroline Bowditch.

Auntie Di Kerr opened the Symposium. Khalil Walker and Patrick Carter gave Keynotes on the Future of Ceremony. We honoured late Elder Uncle Greg with a posthumous exhibition and reflections on day two. Auntie Di Kerr closed the Symposium.

Thank you to Auntie Di Kerr (Alter State Elder in Residence). Your guidance and support were invaluable. Thank you to the Support of Creative Australia and our partners Arts Centre Melbourne and YIRRAMBOI.



Transmit Futures

Transmit Futures, a new performance ensemble, explored ideas of the future through performance.

Six emerging Deaf and Disabled artists and director Andi Snelling developed a performance manifesto. In June they shared a creative development performance at Temperance Hall in South Melbourne.

Transmit Futures took over The Channel (Arts Centre Melbourne) for several days as part of Alter State. They ran workshops and rehearsed before presenting The Manifesto.

“I’d like to explore more, pretty groundbreaking show. Interested in the themes that came from The Manifesto and would like to explore these more.”

- Mark Smith

Artists printing a Lino Print at a Maker Space Workshops, 2024.

Maker Space

Future Reset Maker Space was a multiyear project for young Deaf and Disabled people supported by VicHealth and the Victorian Government through Engage! We ran workshops in partnership with the City of Melbourne’s SIGNAL Program, Arts Centre Melbourne and Regional Arts Victoria. We are running Maker Space in Greater Dandenong and Brimbank in 2025.

[Visit our website to find out more.](#)

Maker Space aims to create a space for Young Deaf and Disabled people to connect with each other through art in a safe and welcoming environment.





In 2024 we ran 34 workshops with 25 young people across Victoria and online. Workshops covered visual and digital arts as well as access and professional development. The workshops gave participants the chance to try new ways of making art and learn new skills. We supported Young Deaf and Disabled people to experience the joy of art making.



Ash Hem, Waved (primary), Water Colour, 2024. Photo by Laura Du Ve

“When I applied for Maker Space, I had no expectations. I just thought I'd be doing some casual drawing over Zoom. But now I'll be part of an exhibition with my own works in an art form that I've never tried before.
– Participant reflecting on the workshops

Exhibition

At the end of the Future Reset Maker Space, we presented “Though Time and Space.” An exhibition at Library at the Dock Gallery featuring 47 works made by the artists involved in Maker Space. Exhibition mediums included collage, illustration, painting, photography, prints, sculpture and video works.

[You can Download the catalogue on the AAV website.](#)



Megan Williams, The Waiting Room, Collage. 2024. Photo by Laura Du Ve



Snug Rock

ALWAYS LIVE partnered with AAV to present WestSide Snug Rock at Mamma Chen's.

Slam Poets Miriam Ana and Zoe Simmons started the evening. With queer pop-folk musical duo Between Mirrors headlining the evening. The atmosphere was welcoming, and people felt like they could be themselves. Audiences packed the show spilling out of the band room.

Westside Snug Rock was part of ALWAYS LIVE's epic 17-day state-wide celebration of contemporary live music supported by the Victorian Government through Visit Victoria.

// Thank you again SO much for inviting me, it was MAGICAL."

Evolve 2.0

We built on the success of 2023 Evolving Arts and Disability in Australia residency. We invited the 2023 artists back to further develop last year's learnings. The planned outcome is a podcast series.

The residency took place at the Arts Access Victoria offices. Some participants joined online. CEO Joshua Pether facilitated the residency with David Doyle, Executive Director at DADAA.

Evolve 2.0 was a partnership between Arts Access Victoria and DADAA with support from Creative Australia.

Sector Development



Training and Consultations

Everyone at AAV works to improve the sector for Deaf and Disabled people. We provide advice and resources to individuals and organisations. We support Deaf and Disabled people's careers. We work with organisations - small and large - to increase their capacity and develop new systems. We run training and consultation services for every part of the arts and culture sector.

In 2024 we ran 25 training sessions for 550 people. We consulted 40 national and international arts and culture organisations on major projects.

case study – Museums Victoria

We worked with Museums Victoria to develop their new Disability Action Plan (DAP).

Museums Victoria is a very large and complex organisation. Staff work across 7 sites (venues) and 6 major departments.

We worked with Museums Victoria staff to get the organisations baseline. To achieve this, we:

- surveyed over 140 staff.
- ran focus groups with staff from every department.
- conducted site access audits at all locations.

We developed a bespoke program for Museums Victoria to map out a whole of organisation approach. We worked with staff from every department. Together we set new aims and standards for Access and Inclusion. We made sure this program covered everyone who engages with Museums Victoria. This includes employment, curation, audiences and education.



Kristy Sweeney, Birds, Embroidery, 2024.



At the end of 2024 we presented Museums Victoria new DAP to all Staff. To support the successful implementation, we:

- Created many accessible versions (Easy Read, Auslan Video, plain language).
- Ran an all staff forum to present the new DAP.
- Ran workshops with operational leads to put in place and track the success of the new DAP.

Creative State 2025 Round Table

Creative Victoria commissioned AAV to interview and hold roundtable consultations on the new Creative State 2025 – 2030. We used 3 modes of engagement for responses:

1. Surveys with follow up contact
2. Group roundtables
3. One on one interviews

We edited the questions supplied by Creative Victoria to meet the access needs of the people we engaged. We compiled all responses and sent to Creative Victoria.

Case Study - One-on-one Interviews With Art Day South

We ran one-on-one interviews with Disabled artists in Art Day South(ADS). Representatives from Creative Victoria joined us to observe. This gave the artists a chance to share their stories, ideas and expectations for the future.

During the interviews artists described how ADS supported them to make art. Major reasons included:

- Support and access we provide the artists.
- Encouragement and support to explore and create art.
- Exhibiting their work.
- Studio's location, facility and materials.



They shared how fulfilling making art is. That making art is a part of them. They love to share what they make.

Some artists explained that outside of the studio they don't have access to artmaking. That without the studio they would not be able to view art in the community. They shared how important the people that support and transport them to the studio are. Without the support it would difficult to take part in Art Day South.

“I am art, art is me. I have to make it.”
- Heather White



Making Space Infrastructure Funding

In 2023 we opened applications for Making Space Infrastructure Funding grants. Making Space aimed to improve accessibility in Victorian creative workspaces and venues.

In February 2024 we awarded funding to 7 creative organisations and collectives.

- Find Your Voice is upgrading its space in Warrnambool.
- Flow Festival Australia has created a Deaf-led digital space.
- BAM Arts Inc made the bathrooms at its Frankston space accessible.
- Collingwood Yards installed automatic doors to improve accessibility to common areas.
- Dancehouse improved venue access.
- Cypher Culture launched an accessible website and live streaming system.
- Mamma Chen's upgraded its venue and live streaming equipment.



We ran the Making Space Infrastructure Funding program on behalf of the Victorian Government.

Case Study - **Cypher Culture (VIC) Inc**

Cypher Culture was able to launch a new accessible website and buy livestreaming equipment with the Making Space Infrastructure Funding grant.

Cypher Culture has Livestreamed 3 major events with the new equipment so far - City Sessions, Dance Battle, and Waacking Inferno. The staff and artists have learned from each event. They used these learnings to make their online events as accessible as possible. Some of the changes included improving the audio recording equipment. Livestreaming has increased access and opened their events up to more people.

Cypher Culture has developed an in-kind equipment program thanks to the funding.

Partnering with community groups to provide in-kind livestreaming support. Allowing similar community groups and organisations to livestream their events.

Cypher Culture built a new website with accessibility standard WCAG Level 2.2. During the website development they discovered accessibility widgets on websites are not accessible. Cypher Culture focused on best practice coding for access. They made sure the website had optimal typography, colour management, and spacing framework. By coding in the access, they made sure website users could use their own active tech and tools.

Vincent Gamon,
Response to Art
Day West Song
Book, 2024.





Auspicing and Grant Support

We support Deaf and Disabled people to apply for funding through our Auspicing program. We work with funders to improve access in their application and assessment processes.

In 2024 we supported 193 Deaf and Disabled people, groups and organisations to apply for funding. We auspiced 7 grants

“Without AAV I would have had no clue how to apply for a grant. I only achieved it thanks to AAV's help. I continue to work with AAV as they have a gold star standard when it comes to treating me like a human being.”

- Beau Windon, auspiced artist

Case study - Aven Hodgess

Aven Hodgess first contacted us for support with an Expression of Interest application to exhibit her work. We encouraged Aven to apply

for a City of Melbourne Quick Response grant. With the aim of funding an exhibition of her work at West End Arts Space. We supported Aven in applying. This included help with question responses, creating a budget and compiling support material.

Aven's application was successful. She launched her exhibition in June. She exhibited mixed-media work on X-rays and collages.

Aven sold eleven artworks. This was her first profitable exhibition. This experience has boosted her confidence and encouraged her to exhibit again.

Aven developed skills in preparing grant applications, handling sales, negotiating with galleries. As well as professional skills in artwork installation and time/energy management.

The project has developed Aven's well-being and boosted her professional profile. As well as boosting her personal expectations in what she can achieve.



Awards

Stella Young Award

The Stella Young Award recognises the artistic impact young Deaf and Disabled people have in comedy, performing arts and screen.

Madeleine Stewart was the 2024 Stella Young Award winner.

Madeleine Stewart is a disability advocate and award-winning comedian. She has over a decade of experience in stand-up comedy. You may have seen Madeleine perform with Adam Hills, Rove McManus, or Reuben Kaye. She hosts the podcast: Our Voices Our Lives Our Way. In 2024 Madeleine worked with the ABC through the StoryTeller scholarship.

“ I'm so thrilled to receive this award. I've always been so much a fan of Stella and her work, and to follow her path that she so gently laid out for us as artists in the industry, especially comedians. I am without words, thank you!”

Lesley Hall Arts and Disability Scholarship

The Lesley Hall Scholarship recognises the impact Victorian Deaf and Disabled artists have when they use art as a tool for change.

Julie Dickson was the 2024 Lesley Hall Scholarship winner.

Julie Dickson is a writer based in Naarm. As a person of short stature, she wishes to see more short statured people represented positively in fiction. She's currently writing a young adult novel where the main character is a person of short stature. She has had articles published on ABC Sport and SOCIETY19 and has had poetry published in WORDLY. She has received the Wheeler Centre Hot Desk fellowship, The Varuna Write Space fellowship, and The Writers Victoria Storming the City fellowship.



Amplify Award

The Arts Access Victoria Amplify Award is part of the Music Victoria Awards. We have been working hard to advocate for Deaf and Disabled Victorian musicians over many years. This award is part of that legacy.

Saint Ergo was the 2024 Amplify Award winner!

The nominees for this year's award included Among the Restless, Magdalia, Naavikaran, R.em.edy and Saint Ergo.

We presented this award during the Music Victoria Awards ceremony at BMW Edge, Federation Square on Tuesday 31 October.

Vincent
Gamon,
Response to
Art Day West
Song Book,
Water Colour,
2024.



The Gathering

The Gathering is a forum for Deaf and Disabled artists held on the last Tuesday of every month (except January and December). The Gathering is always online on Zoom, and sometimes hybrid (both in-person and online). The Gathering is a disability-held space, using a self-determination framework.

Highlights of the 2024 Gathering included:

- Two hybrid (in-person and online) sessions presented at Arts Centre Melbourne and The Collective
- Guest speakers from: Arts Centre Melbourne, Creative Australia, Emerging Writers Festival, Melbourne Fringe Festival, Vic Health.
- Artist talks about AAV's The Collective, Transmit Futures and Future Reset Maker Space.
- And more.

Financials

Arts Access Society Inc. Trading as Arts Access Victoria (ABN 34 192 751 897) For the Year Ended 31 December 2024

AAV completed the year with an operational deficit of \$144,494. This is due to income recognized in 2023 for projects related to 2024, according to the audit and accounting standards and an overall deficit of \$53,424 due to an increase in our trust fund investment value by \$91,070.

AAV is working through the new NDIS changes but since the pandemic we have seen changes to studio numbers, with an impact to our NDIS funded activities. Our NDIS reserves covered this deficit in 3 funds. We received State government funds that has allowed us to build our workforce and to continue running our programs and expanding activities.

Statement of Profit or Loss

| | Note | 2024 \$ | 2023 \$ |
|---|------|--------------------|-------------|
| Revenue | 4 | 3,039,105 | 2,201,129 |
| Employee benefit expenses | 4 | (1,931,512) | (1,813,365) |
| Depreciation and amortisation expense | 5 | (72,733) | (89,793) |
| Program cost | | (974,650) | (331,860) |
| Marketing and communications | | (46,857) | (37,844) |
| Administration expenses | | (232,348) | (289,888) |
| Interest expense - leases | | (549) | (4,508) |
| Surplus/(deficit) from continuing operations | | (219,544) | (366,129) |
| Investment activities: | | | |
| Interest income | | 32,617 | 25,332 |
| Investment income - Equity Trustees | | 42,433 | 24,360 |
| Net gain/(loss) on financial assets - FVTPL | | 91,070 | 113,590 |
| Surplus/(deficit) from investing activities | | 166,120 | 163,282 |
| Surplus/(deficit) for the year | | (53,424) | (202,847) |
| Other comprehensive income for the year | | - | - |
| Total comprehensive income for the year | | (53,424) | (202,847) |

Statement of Financial Position

| | Note | 2024 \$ | 2023 \$ |
|-------------------------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| ASSETS | | | |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 6 | 815,676 | 1,861,306 |
| Trade and other receivables | 7 | 140,919 | 70,661 |
| Other assets | 8 | 35,090 | 31,686 |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | | 991,685 | 1,963,653 |
| NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Other financial assets | 9 | 1,218,369 | 1,127,299 |
| Plant and equipment | 10 | 16,740 | 27,983 |
| Intangible assets | | 4,863 | 38,449 |
| Right-of-use assets | 12 | - | 25,392 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | 1,239,972 | 1,219,123 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 2,231,657 | 3,182,776 |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Trade and other payables | 13 | 140,667 | 212,654 |
| Lease liabilities | 12 | - | 26,187 |
| Employee benefits | 15 | 186,950 | 187,442 |
| Income in advance | 14 | 413,612 | 1,197,019 |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES | | 741,229 | 1,623,302 |
| NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Employee benefits | 15 | 32,864 | 48,486 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | 32,864 | 48,486 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | 774,093 | 1,671,788 |
| NET ASSETS | | 1,457,564 | 1,510,988 |
| EQUITY | | | |
| Reserves | 16 | 460,000 | 460,000 |
| Retained earnings | | 997,564 | 1,050,988 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | | 1,457,564 | 1,510,988 |

Our Board

Nic Vogelpoel - Chair

Nic has worked in public health, development, sustainability and disability services for over 15 years. He is co-Director of international consultancy firm, Day Four Projects. Nic started his career at Access Arts (Queensland). He has worked in the sector across Australia and the UK. Nic joined the AAV Board in 2022, and served as Co-Vice Chair in 2023. He became the Chair in 2024.

Jodie Nicks - Vice Chair

Jodie lives with disability and is a senior adviser to the Victorian government. She advises in disability and access. Jodie is passionate about creating more inclusive communities for Deaf and disabled people. Particularly for those experiencing many intersecting forms of systemic discrimination. Jodie has worked as a performing artist for many years. Jodie received the inaugural Funds in Court Inspire award in 2016. The award recognised her contribution to performing arts and her impact on access and inclusion. Jodie joined the AAV Board in 2022.

Laura Purbrick - Treasurer

Laura Purbrick advises non-profit organisations and Family Offices on finance and investment strategy. She is currently a partner at PWC. She has worked as a director at ANZ Private Bank as well as JANA. Laura is passionate about the arts and giving back to the community. She believes in considering the positive social impact of our actions, as individuals and as a community. Laura joined the AAV Board in 2022.

Erin Kanygin

Erin is a former musical theatre performer turned audience member and lover of the arts. She now works as a Legal Transformation Lawyer at Gilbert + Tobin where she specialises in legal automation, artificial intelligence, and other forms of digital disruption. Erin has a passion for access to justice and has always been strongly committed to giving back to the community having volunteered extensively for various not-for-profits in Australia, Canada and Brazil. Erin is truly honoured to be a board member for Arts Access Victoria. She was previously involved with AAV as an "Observer" of the board through the Observership Program. Erin was appointed to the AAV Board in 2023.

Geoffrey Lim

Geoffrey Lim is the executive director of Cypher Culture, a non-profit organisation empowering street dance communities and culture to thrive. He has 20 years experience as a deafblind performing artist and community leader. He is a child of Cambodian refugees. Geoffrey has 8 years experience across NAB and Macquarie Group specialising in risk, and financial analysis. He is an alumni of the Observership Program with observer roles at Chunky Move and Outer Urban Projects. He sits on City of Melbourne's Disability Advisory Committee, and holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws from The University of Melbourne. He joined the board in 2024.

Henry Dow

Henry is a solicitor based in Naarm / Melbourne who grew up in regional Victoria in a large family who were involved in the para-sports movement, disability advocacy and the arts. He practices law primarily in Native Title and Indigenous land rights, traveling throughout Australia to work with clients, who are often from remote communities in northern Australia. He frequently advises boards of major First Nations led organisations, government owned agencies and private enterprise. Henry has a passion for volunteerism and has held numerous leadership positions across several community organisations. In addition to sitting on the AAV board, Henry is currently the deputy chair of the Portsea Children's Camp. Outside of work, Henry can be found cheering on the Geelong football club, swimming in the ocean or engaging in any number of niche sports that are forgiving on knees. Henry Joined the board in 2024.

Sam Martin

Sam Martin (he/him) is a Deaf Gay/Queer creative producer and director passionate about the many facets of identities, inclusivity, navigating English and Auslan, and empowering and encouraging Deaf and queer communities. He has worked and continues to work within theatre and film with a range of exciting projects. His award-winning short film "Deafying Gravity" was shown internationally and continues to tour nationally. Sam joined the AAV Board in 2022.

Siobhan McGinnity

Dr Siobhan McGinnity is an audiologist, artist and advocate within the music industry. Her audiology practice focuses on the care of musicians, tutoring future audiologists from the University of Melbourne's Hearing Care Clinic. Her PhD, Preventing Hearing Injury in the Music Industry was twice awarded by the National Hearing Conservation Association (USA). She has creatively produced industry showcases, performances and disability mentorship programs (Music Makers, Arts Access Victoria), and served on the Womens' Advisory Panel of Music Victoria. Her music, released under MAGNETS, combines her artistry, science and lived-experience of disability, receiving praise from rage to RollingStone. She joined the board in 2024.

Our Staff



Staff at The Collective Opening, 2024. Photo by Raphael Recht.

Thank you to amazing staff that make our artistic and sector activities possible.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Aaron McMurray | CJ Jonathan | James Gleeson | Campbell | Rhian Hinkley |
| Alanah Guiry | Chris Barry | Jamie Rawls | Liam Hancock | Sabina Knox |
| Alister Karl | Cubbie Mako | Janice Florence | Lily Montgomery-Primmer | Sarah Fiddaman |
| Amy Dellar | Danielle Marlow | Jessica Hudson | Lily Nguyen | Sebastian Fowler |
| Andrea Hughes | Dannika Horvat | Joanna Leigh | Lindy Chadwick | Stephanie Sposito |
| Arty Owens | David Rosetzky | Joshua Pether | Louise Barbon-Elliott | Tania Smith |
| Annalies Visser | David Van De Leur | Juliana Qian | Luke King | Tara Kingston |
| Ara Dolatian | Ellie Purseglove | Julianne Nguyen | Maddy Elrick | Teague Leigh |
| Artemis Munoz | Emilie Wright | Kate Symons | Margaret Mayhew | Theresa Harrison |
| Ashley Ronning | Erin Dick | Kim Sargent Wishart | Maria Tran | Timothy Marshall |
| Ayse Ayranci | Fiona Tuomy | Krystal Seigerman | Mathew Wooden | Timothy Reid |
| Betra Fraval | Fury | Lachlan Meagher | Milly Cooper | Victoria Fitzpatrick |
| Caoife Power | Geoff Robinson | Lefa Singleton | Nikki Zerella | Zahran Saheed |
| Carl DiQuinzio | Gordon Taill | Norton | Phillip Noack | |
| Carlos Parraga | Helen Timbury | Leisa Maree | Rachel Edward | |
| Caroline Bowditch | Helen Graham | | | |

Our Supporters and Funders

Thank you to all our funders, partners and supporters that make our artistic and sector activities possible.



| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Access To Arts | Bus Projects Studio | Australia | Marriner Theatres | Studios |
| Accessible Arts NSW | Cake | Diversity Arts Victoria | Melbourne Arts Precinct (Mapco) | Screen Australia |
| Acmi | Chippendale Lodge Srs | Emerging Writers Festival | Melbourne Fringe | Services Australia |
| Always Live | Chisholm Institute | Engage! | Melbourne International Film Festival | Signal |
| Amaga | Chunky Move Dance Co | Equal Employment Opportunity Network | Melbourne Recital Centre | Southwest Tafe |
| Apam | Cinespace | Expression Austra Lia | Melton City Council | St Kilda Film Festival |
| Apra Amcos | City Of Banyule | Feral Arts | Melton Willows Srs | State Library Of Victoria |
| Artplay | City Of Boroondara | Flinders University | Merri-Bek City Council | Sydenham Grace Srs |
| Arts Access Aotearoa | City Of Brimbank | Flow Festival | Midsumma | The Push |
| Arts Access Australia | City Of Darebin | Footscray Community Arts | Moonee Valley Council | The Wheeler Centre |
| Arts Centre Melbourne | City Of Frankston | Footscray House Srs | Multicultural Arts Victoria | Theatre Network Australia |
| Arts House | City Of Greater Dandenong | Greenhaven Srs | Museum Victoria | Undercover Arts Festival |
| Arts Industry Council Of Victoria | City Of Kingston | Hobsons Bay City Council | Music Victoria | University Of Melbourne |
| Arts Law Society | City Of Melbourn | Hong Kong Ccd | National Gallery Of Victoria | University Of Queensland |
| Arts Project Australia | City Of Merri-Bek | Ilbjerri Theatre Company | Next Wave | Vapac |
| Artshub | City Of Port Phillip | Incite Artsispa | Northern Terrace Srs | Vichealth |
| Ashwood School | City Of Whittlesea | Jmc Academy | Not Just Opera | Vicscreen |
| Association Of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres | City Of Wyndham | Koorie Heritage Trust | Orchestra Victoria | Victoria University |
| Auspicious Arts | City Of Yarra | Korea Disability Culture And Arts Center | Park Towers Management | Victorian Government |
| Australian National Academy Of Music (Anam) | Collingwood Yards | La Mama Theatre | Public Libraries Victoria | Victorian Music Development Offices |
| Bayside Special Development School | Creative Australia | La Trobe Regional Gallery | Queens Lodge Srs | Vision Australia |
| Bendigo Arts Gallery | Creative Victoria | Little Projector Company | Queensland University Of Technology | Visit Victoria |
| Berendale School | Curtin University | Live Nation | Regional Arts Victoria | Western Edge |
| Bowery Theatre And St Albans Community Centre | Dadaa | Louis Joel Arts & Community Centre | Rising Festival | White Horse Performing Arts |
| Brunswick Lodge Srs | Dax Centre | Lucy Guerin Inc | Royal Ave Srs | Wild At Heart |
| Brunswick Uniting Church | Department Of Families, Fairness And Housing | Maribyrnong City Council | Schinzy Inc | Willows Srs |
| Bundoora Homestead Art Centre | Department Of Health | Maroondah City Council | School House | Wyndham Council |
| | Department Of Infrastructure Transport, Regional Development And Communications | | | Yarra Sculpture Gallery |
| | Diversity Arts | | | Yirramboi |

