

Disability Access & Inclusion Plan 2018 - 2022



WESTERN
AUSTRALIAN
MUSEUM



This plan is available, upon request, in alternative formats such as in large or standard print, electronic format by email, in audio format on CD or on the Western Australian Museum's website, or Braille.

Contents

CEO's Message	3
1. Summary of the Museum's Services	4
2. DAIP Policy Statement	5
3. Recent progress	6
4. How this DAIP was developed	7
5. How this DAIP will be promoted	8
6. Reporting and evaluation	9
7. DAIP Strategies 2018 – 2022	10

CEO's Message

I am pleased to present the Western Australian Museum's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) for 2018 – 2022. The DAIP has been developed on the fundamental basis that people with disability, their families, and carers have the same rights to access our services as any member of the community.

This has been prepared following a review of Disability Action and Inclusion Plans across the Western Australian Culture and Arts Portfolio, including that of the Western Australian Museum, conducted by DADAA Ltd in late 2017, as well as a period of public consultation.

Our flagship site in the Perth Cultural Centre is undergoing a major \$428 million redevelopment and will reopen in 2020. Through the ongoing work of the New Museum Access and Inclusion Reference Panel, we will ensure that access and inclusion are touchstones for the development of the State's most important new cultural asset.

The Museum seeks to continuously improve access to its content and facilities through a range of methods and media. The transformative power of digital and other new technologies is a key element of access and inclusion planning for a contemporary museum service.

The Museum emphasises that while its DAIP focused on meeting the needs of people with disability, their families and carers, improved access benefits everyone.

Museums represent a major public social investment by societies. For the Western Australian Museum, the DAIP 2018 – 2022 is central to delivering a leading museum service that is accessible to, and enjoyed by, all members of the community.

Alec Coles

Chief Executive Officer

1. Summary of the Museum's Services

The Western Australian Museum [the Museum] maintains a Collections and Research Centre in Welshpool which stores more than 8.1 million objects that encompass biological, geological, historical and cultural material from the State, the nation and around the world.

The Museum's mission is: "To inspire people to explore and share their identity, culture, environment and sense of place, and contribute to the diversity and creativity of our world." This is achieved by developing, maintaining, interpreting and presenting the State's unique collections and by providing inclusive and accessible public programs, exhibitions, digital content and education programs.

The main ways in which members of the public interact with the Museum are through:

- Permanent and temporary exhibitions;
- Off-site exhibitions whereby the Museum created the content;
- Collections online - documenting and digitising the State Collection to enhance accessibility for both researchers and the general public;
- Access online - The Museum's website is an important platform that allows visitors to engage, explore and learn about its collections and research activity;
- Schools and Public Programs;
- Guided tours;
- Media - The Museum uses a range of platforms to promote its work across its many disciplines throughout the State;
- Developing an extensive range of partnerships;
- Community events; and
- Outreach activities to the wider WA community.

In addition to the Collections and Research Centre in Welshpool and the Perth Cultural Centre site under redevelopment, the Museum has the following public sites:

- WA Maritime Museum;
- WA Shipwrecks Museum;
- Museum of Geraldton;
- Museum of the Great Southern; and
- Museum of the Goldfields.

2. DAIP Policy Statement

The Museum Trustees and staff are committed to ensuring that all aspects of the Museum are fully accessible to all sectors of the community by removing or reducing any physical, sensory or intellectual barriers to access.

The Museum interprets fully accessible to mean that all Museum activities, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) are open, available and usable to people with disabilities, providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by other people in the community.

The Museum is committed to consulting with people with disabilities, their families and carers, and with disability organisations, to ensure that barriers to access and inclusion are addressed appropriately.

The Museum is committed to ensuring that its agents and contractors work towards the desired access and inclusion outcomes in this DAIP.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the WA Museum.

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the WA Museum.

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the WA Museum in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the WA Museum as other people receive from the staff of the WA Museum.

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the WA Museum.

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the WA Museum.

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the WA Museum.

3. Recent progress

The Museum's DAIP was last reviewed in 2011/12. Over the life of the Museum's previous DAIP (2012 – 2017) examples of progress made towards delivering an accessible and inclusive museum service for WA were that we:

- Acquired accessible display cases with dimensions appropriate for wheelchair access and deployed these across exhibitions at Museum sites.
- Released a WA Museum wide smartphone app for curatorial content throughout the Museum that is accessible to people with disabilities.
- Organised and hosted a Web Accessibility Camp in Perth to encourage provision of accessible information through new formats across the public sector and government.
- Developed and implemented an accessible *Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy* allowing for complaints to be made in a variety of formats and responded to complaints relating to access in a timely manner.
- Released text panels from major exhibitions as webpages for use with assistive technology such as text to speech. We also released audio guides for major exhibitions with corresponding transcripts available.
- Hosted experiences for visitors with memory loss that were themed around the British Museum exhibition *A History of the World in 100 Objects*. These included the on-site 'Object Memory Workshops' and weekly guided tours during March 2016 offered in conjunction with Alzheimer's Australia (WA).
- Established and actively consulted with a representative panel of people with disabilities, advocates and carers, to ensure universal access requirements are central to the development of the New Museum, located in the Perth Cultural Centre and due to open to the public in 2020.
- Made volunteering more inclusive with a number of volunteers with disabilities becoming part of the volunteering team and volunteering front of house (as an engagement volunteer), interpreting the galleries and adding to the visitor experience.
- Participated in Alzheimer's WA Dementia Friendly Communities Program, with Museum sites being recognised as 'Dementia Friendly Spaces'.
- Upgraded various facilities to provide for greater access and inclusion, such as: the Maritime Museum's main entrance and toilet doors; the lift at the Shipwrecks Museum; the lift and toilets in the administration building at the

Museum's Collections and Research Centre; and gallery lighting was upgraded to improve visibility.

- Delivered public programs and educational experiences with a focus on accessibility. Examples included:
 - Hands-on learning during facilitated school experiences that incorporate sensory elements and the integration of a variety of learning styles;
 - Early-learner programming at the Museum's Discovery Zone (in the State Library of Western Australia) incorporated sensory elements with a focus on tactile experiences; and
 - Early learner programming for the exhibitions incorporated elements of movement, song, story-telling and craft suitable for learners with low to moderate fine-motor-skills.

4. How this DAIP was developed

Following an Expression of Interest, DADAA Ltd, as an organisation specialising in the arts and disability, was appointed to conduct a review of Disability Action and Inclusion Plans across the WA Culture and Arts Portfolio, which included the WA Museum.

The review (*Embedding Access: An Opportunity for the Arts Sector*) cited examples of steps taken by the Museum to improve access in a number of areas:

- The Maritime Museum and the Shipwrecks Museum were rated highest amongst all DAIP-based categories: building, staff, programs and services, information accessibility, feedback process, website and overall experience. Feedback about the Museum's website from users was particularly positive.
- The partnerships with Alzheimer's Australia to host an exhibition that dealt with storytelling and memory loss, as well as the Dementia Friendly Spaces Program, were cited.
- The ongoing consultation with the Access and Inclusion Panel as part of the New Museum development.

Key findings of the consultation report, particularly those that relate to potential areas of improvement, were:

- The need to improve staff awareness of DAIP Strategies. Internal communication and disability awareness training and induction of staff and volunteers about DAIP strategies is thus a high priority.

- In venues with constraints imposed by older-style or heritage buildings, staff attitudes and willingness to assist a visitor with disability play a major role in overcoming such limitations, and greatly enhance the experience of a visitor with disability in feeling welcomed and included. Regular customer service training with a focus on disability access and inclusion is thus referenced in the DAIP Strategies 2018 – 2022.
- The need for consideration to be given to marketing to people with disability, their families and carers.
- There is an ongoing need to investigate and invest in new technologies to increase access to content across programs, including 3D printing and wifi apps for audio description.

The report was circulated internally, with staff being consulted as to the findings, which influenced the development of the DAIP Strategies for 2018 – 2022 (set out below).

Public notices advertising the development of a new DAIP were placed in *The West Australian* newspaper on 22 December 2017, 5 January 2018 and 19 January 2018, with contact details being provided for members of the public to make submissions to the Museum. The notices linked to the Museum's website, which also set out details of the review, and invited members of the public to complete a survey.

5. How this DAIP will be promoted

We will make the DAIP available to the Museum's employees and volunteers and the community, including people with a disability, their families and carers. The plan will be available on our website. It will also be available in alternative formats on request either by email or in person at our sites.

Availability of the DAIP will be promoted in the following ways:

- A notice in *The West Australian* newspaper;
- Placement on the Museum's internet site;
- Electronic copies mailed to members of our Access and Inclusion Reference Panel;
- Bulletin notice on the Museum's intranet and by email to staff; and
- Copies provided to key stakeholder partners and contractors as appropriate.

6. Reporting and evaluation

We will review the DAIP 2018 – 2022 at the end of the five year period and will report to the Department of Communities: Disability Services by 30 June each year on our annual progress in implementing the DAIP.

The Museum's *Annual Report* will also detail steps taken to implement the DAIP during the annual reporting period.

The Museum will also prepare an annual DAIP Implementation Plan, to be endorsed by the Executive Management Team at the commencement of each financial year. The Implementation Plan shall outline steps to be taken to action the DAIP at an operation level, and be used as the benchmark against which reporting is undertaken at the end of the year.

Where contractors and agents are engaged to deliver a service on behalf of the Museum, they will be provided with a copy of this DAIP and asked to report on relevant measures taken to implement it, as appropriate depending on the type of service delivered.

7. DAIP Strategies 2018 – 2022

The following overarching strategies will guide tasks, reflected in annual implementation plans, that the Western Australian Museum will undertake from 2018 – 2022 to improve access to its services, buildings and information.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the WA Museum.	
Strategies	
1	Develop and implement public programs and activities so that they meet the needs of people with disability, their families and carers. Where possible, develop the public programs in partnership with people with disability, their families and carers.
2	Ensure universal access is fundamental to the planning, design and installation of Museum exhibitions including implementation of a best practice 'Access and Inclusion Checklist for Exhibitions'.
3	Ensure Museum events, including associated marketing material, are accessible to people with disability including those held in non-Museum facilities.
4	Explore new and creative ways of delivering Museum experiences, including through the use of new technologies, so that they are accessible to people with disability, their families and carers.
5	Actively encourage participation in Museum programs, exhibitions, events, and other activities by people with disabilities, their families and carers, including through the promotion and marketing of these programs and activities.
6	Where Museum events and services are tailored to people with disability, marketing material will be specifically targeted to reach relevant audiences and raise awareness of these events and services.

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the WA Museum.	
Strategies	
1	Improve the accessibility and ease of use of Museum buildings and facilities so that they meet the needs of people with disability, their families and carers.
2	Ensure that planning, design, construction and delivery of the New Museum (to be completed by 2020) comprehensively addresses universal access requirements.
3	Work cooperatively with public authorities to ensure adjacent facilities, such as for parking, drop off zones and amenities, meet the needs of people with disability, their families and carers.

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the WA Museum in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategies

- 1 Ensure all information provided by the Museum to the public, including the Museum's website, complies with the *State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities* and is perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.
- 2 Ensure information is available that assists people with disability, their families and carers to plan for a visit to a Museum program, exhibition, event, and other activity, whether held onsite or off-site.
- 3 Provide information to the public that is accessible by default where practicable, and also provide information in alternative formats upon request.

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the WA Museum as other people receive from the staff of WA Museum.

Strategies

- 1 Through annual training and professional development, ensure all staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skills to provide quality services for people with disability, their families and carers.
- 2 Ensure that staff and volunteers provide a welcoming environment for people with disability, their families and carers, and that they are able to provide specific assistance if required to ensure the Museum is widely accessible and inclusive.
- 3 Ensure that the induction of new Museum employees and volunteers includes access and inclusion awareness, customer service, and other requirements of this DAIP.

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the WA Museum.

Strategies

- 1 Ensure that complaint mechanisms are accessible for people with disability and that complaints can be made in a flexible manner.
- 2 Monitor complaints that relate to disability access and inclusion (number per year) and ensure that there is timely resolution of such complaints.

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the WA Museum.

Strategies

- 1 Ensure all public consultation by, or on behalf of, the Museum is conducted in an inclusive and accessible manner.
- 2 Continue to convene the Access and Inclusion Reference Panel that provides guidance on access and inclusion for people with disability, their families and carers, for the New Museum development. Continue access and inclusion related consultation, on an organisation wide basis, after the New Museum development is concluded.

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the WA Museum.

Strategies

- 1 Ensure recruitment practices are inclusive and encourage people with disability to apply for employment with the Museum.
- 2 Through training and professional development and other means, ensure that Museum staff with disability, as well as staff who are a carer for a person with disability, are supported appropriately so they can undertake their employment responsibilities.

Date effective: March 2018

